

Psychosynthesis

The Psychologist Roberto Assagioli, M.D. and his work

Biography

Extracts of his life-work

The Practice of Meditation



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The Psychologist Roberto Assagioli



Roberto Assagioli (Venice, February 27, 1888 - Capolona d'Arezzo, August 23, 1974) was an Italian psychologist, humanist, and visionary. Assagioli founded the psychological movement known as psychosynthesis, which is still being developed today by therapists, and psychologists, who practice his technique. His work in the field of psychology concentrated on spiritual needs, pertaining to the will and Ego.

Assagioli did not like to discuss his personal life, as he preferred to be remembered for his scientific work. Very few biographical accounts on the life of Roberto Assagioli are available, and most are not written in English.

Assagioli was born on February 27th, 1898 in Venice, Italy, and came from a middle-class Jewish background. He was born under the name **Roberto Marco Grego**, however, his biological father died when Assagioli was two years old, and his mother remarried Alessandro Emanuele Assagioli soon afterward. As a youth, Assagioli was exposed to many creative outlets at a young age, such as art, and music, which were believed to have inspired his work in Psychosynthesis. By the age of 18, he had learned eight different languages, namely Italian (his native tongue), English, French, Russian, Greek, Latin, German, and Sanskrit. It was at this age he also began to travel, mainly to Russia, where he learned about social systems, and politics.

In 1922 he married a young woman by the name of Nella, and they had one son together, Ilario Assagioli.

In 1938, Assagioli was arrested and imprisoned by Mussolini's Fascist government, due to his Jewish heritage, and his humanistic writing. He was placed in solitary confinement for over a month, until he was released and returned to his family. During World War II, his family's farm in Florence, Italy was destroyed, and both he and his family fled underground. Tragically, his son died at the age of 28 from lung disease, which was accredited to severe stress from the harsh living conditions during the war. Once the war had ended, he returned to his work, and began his legacy, known as psychosynthesis.

The years after the war were relatively calm, and it was during this time that he founded various foundations dedicated to psychosynthesis, in Europe and North America. Assagioli lived a long and prosperous life, and had a happy forty-year marriage, until he died at age 86 on August 23rd, 1974. The cause of his death was unknown.

Assagioli received his first degree in neurology and psychiatry at Istituto di Studii Superiori Pratici e di Perfezionamento, in Florence, Italy, in 1910. It was during this time he began writing articles that criticized psychoanalysis, in which Assagioli argued a more holistic approach.

Once he finished his studies in Italy, Assagioli went to Switzerland, where he was trained in psychiatry at the psychiatric hospital Burghölzli in Zürich. This led to him opening the first psychoanalytic practice in Italy, known as Istituto di Psicosintesi. However, his work in psychoanalysis left him unsatisfied with the field as a whole, as he felt that it to be too incomplete.

Assagioli is famous for developing and founding the science of psychosynthesis, a spiritual and holistic approach to psychology that had developed from psychoanalysis. Assagioli insisted that psychosynthesis was a legitimate science, which was continuously developing, and which agreed and disagreed with theories formulated by other psychologists, particularly Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung.

Trained in psychoanalysis but unsatisfied by what he regarded as its incompleteness as a whole, Assagioli felt that love, wisdom, creativity, and will, were all important components that should be included in psychoanalysis. Assagioli's earliest development of psychosynthesis started in 1911, when he began his formal education in psychology. He continued his work on psychosynthesis right up until his death.

He was largely inspired by Freud's idea of the repressed mind and Jung's theories of the collective unconscious. Freud and Assagioli were known to have corresponded, although they never had the chance to meet. Assagioli considered Jung's theories to be closest in the understanding of psychosynthesis.

Assagioli accredited much of his inspiration for psychosynthesis to his month-long incarceration in solitary confinement in 1938. He used his time in prison to exercise his mental will, by meditating daily while in prison. He concluded that he was able to change his punishment into an opportunity to investigate his inner-Self.

Psychosynthesis Today

In the December 1974 issue of "*Psychology Today*", Assagioli was interviewed by Sam Keen, in which Assagioli discussed the similarities between psychoanalysis and psychosynthesis:

In the practice of therapy we both agree in rejecting 'pathologism' that is, concentration upon morbid manifestations and symptoms of a supposed psychological 'disease'. We regard man as a fundamentally, healthy organism in which there may be temporary malfunctioning. Nature is always trying to re-establish harmony, and within the psyche the principle of synthesis is dominant. Irreconcilable opposites do not exist. The task of therapy is to aid the individual in transforming the personality, and integrating apparent contradictions. Both Jung and myself have stressed the need for a person to develop the higher psychic functions, the spiritual dimension

Assagioli also highlighted the differences between psychoanalysis and psychosynthesis:

Perhaps the best way to state our differences is with a diagram of the psychic functions. Jung differentiates four functions: sensation, feeling, thought, and intuition. Psychosynthesis says that Jung's four functions do not provide for a complete description of the psychological life. Our view can be visualized like this: We hold that outside imagination or fantasy is a distinct function. There is also a group of functions that impels us toward action in the outside world. This group includes instincts, tendencies, impulses, desires, and aspirations. And here we come to one of the central foundations of psychosynthesis: There is a fundamental difference between drives, impulses, desires, and the will. In the human condition there are frequent conflicts between desire and will. And we will place the will in a central position at the heart of self-consciousness or the Ego.

Assagioli also asserted about the will:

The will is not merely assertive, aggressive, and controlling. There is the accepting will, yielding will, the dedicated will. You might say that there is a feminine polarity to the will –the willing surrender, the joyful acceptance of the other functions of the personality.

At the end of the interview, Keen himself concluded:

It is hard to know what counts as evidence for the validity of a world view and the therapeutic it entails. Every form of therapy has dramatic successes and just as dramatic failures. Enter as evidence in the case for psychosynthesis an *ad hominem* argument: in speaking about death there was no change in the tone or intensity of Assagioli's voice and the light still played in his dark eyes, and his mouth was never very far from a smile.

Since Assagioli's death in the early 1970s, psychosynthesis has continued to be embraced as a comprehensive psychological approach for finding inner peace and harmony.

The Psychosynthesis & Education Trust center in Britain was founded by Assagioli in 1965, and is currently being run by President Lady Diana Whitmore. The Trust is affiliated with Humanistic and Integrative Psychology Section of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP), European Association for Psychotherapy (EAP), and is a founding member of the European Federation of Psychosynthesis Psychotherapy (EFPP). At present time, the group consists of a large group of psychosynthesis practitioners who mediate students. The Trust offers workshops, courses, and a newsletter, to anyone who is interested in learning more about psychosynthesis.

Dr. Roberto Assagioli, founder of Psychosynthesis

The following description of the life and work of Dr. Roberto Assagioli was taken from an article titled *In Memoriam: Roberto Assagioli (1888-1974)* in the second *Synthesis Journal*. Author is unknown.]

Roberto Assagioli died quietly on August 23, 1974. his spirit, his thinking and his active collaboration formed the basis of *SYNTHESIS*. We remember him with deep gratitude.

His life had a wholeness offered to few men or women; whole, in the sense that the bold innovator born nearly a century ago lived to see his ideas take form in hundreds of articles, books in many languages, students in numerous countries, a body of theory pregnant with new implications and consequences, and centres

continuing to develop his work in the United States, Canada, England, Italy, Switzerland, France, Greece and Argentina.

Such outer completeness, the struggle well-won, and the legacy left to his fellow men would be enough. But there was - and equally precious for those who knew him personally - an *inner* wholeness about this man that was itself a continuous, living triumph over death. He had the achievement of joy, of a dynamic serenity and wisdom. And he was complete in that he himself did not fear death: so vital, he never worried his passing, despite his own physical frailty during the last twenty-five years. It was as if he sensed that nothing important would be taken away, as if, in the joy he achieved, there was some personal knowledge of immortality.

Be that as it may, the achievement of the man, both public and personal, recalls our attention and deserves to be remembered.

Roberto Assagioli was born in Venice in 1888. To the west of Italy Queen Victoria ruled the Empire, and to the east a Viennese physician was already mining the foundations of Victorian culture. In 1910 Assagioli, the young medical student, introduced the important discoveries of Sigmund Freud to his professors at Florence. His name appears in the histories of psychoanalysis as one of the first two or three Italians to pioneer in bringing the courage and rationality of the psychoanalytic insight to bear on the frequent shallowness of Victorian life. This alone would, and did, make him noteworthy.

The remarkable thing, however, is that while embracing the radical new currents of psychoanalysis, he simultaneously - in 1910 - laid the groundwork for a critique of that same psychoanalysis. He saw that it was only partial, that it neglected the exploration of what Maslow, some sixty years later, would call "the farther reaches of human nature." Assagioli's purpose was to create a scientific approach which encompassed the whole man - creativity and will, joy and wisdom, as well as impulses and drives. Moreover, he wanted this integrative approach to be practical - not merely an understanding of how we live, but an aid in helping us live better, more fully, according to the best that is within each of us. This conception he called psychosynthesis.

He was very early. Who was there to hear such a large and balanced statement? Not many people in the twenties, not in the thirties, not in the forties, not in the fifties, were ready. It was only in the late sixties that, with the suddenness born of deep and massive need, his books and other writings were taken up by thousands. Almost sixty years needed to elapse, so far was he ahead of his time.

He was never alone, of course. He was always a well-known figure, even prominent in Roman culture before the Second World War. He had

correspondents and friends, colleagues and co-workers, all over the world - Jung, Maslow and Tagore among them. But the real work of those many years was a work of preparation; of patient thinking, studying, and learning the ways of the human psyche, of writing and rewriting. It was as if he were called to nurture, in a relative quietness, the outline of a theoretical and practical view of the human being that men and women of the seventies and beyond could use.

Of his personal goodness, his patient understanding of co-workers, students, and clients, his brilliant and seasoned wisdom, his compassion and selfless giving of himself in service to others - much could be said. Here though, the note that we wish to sound is the one he himself always sounded - the note of joy. Claude Servan-Schreiber wrote of the first visit she and her husband made to the aged Florentine Doctor: "For a long moment we looked at each other, all three of us, without speaking. Assagioli smiling, his eyes astonishingly vital within a face lined by great age, moving over us, going from one to the other. Was he submitting us to an examination? It was, instead, the opposite. He was allowing us to discover him leisurely, to establish a connection with him, without us even realizing this was happening. It was a climate of communication where words find their place later, while something like a current was developing between us. His face was shining with an extraordinary, radiant, inner glow, such as I have never encountered in an octogenarian, and rarely in men much younger. This message of joy, perceived immediately, communicated immediately, is the finest memory which I keep of the numerous meetings which we later had with him. 'All is possible and accessible *to you*: joy, serenity, I offer them to you as a gift.'

The sources of his joy were deep within him, and he shared them freely, showing many others a way toward the freedom of such joy. He found joy in the experience of what he called the Self- the inner core, dynamic and transcendent, radiant with consciousness and powerful with will, immutable, universal. He found joy in his own Self and the Self he could see in everyone else. He elicited the joy of Self-realization in those who came to see him. He found joy in the contemplation of beauty, of art, of ideas, of service; of science, of nature. It was the joy of this knowing that must have made the years of his waiting easy. This was a far-seeing joy, one that grew on his love of contemplating from his garden the vast and starry reaches of the Italian sky - the endless worlds, the living cosmic miracle of what is and what is becoming. We can miss such a man, but it is hard to mourn you, Roberto, you with your face in the stars!

Notes:

Psychiatrist, psychotherapist, and parapsychologist. He was born February 27, 1888, in Venice, Italy, and educated at University of Florence (M.D.). As a young psychiatrist he became disenchanted with first Freudian and then Jungian

psychoanalysis. Thus he turned his attention to the development of a new psychology he termed psychosynthesis. Psychosynthesis assumes that in addition to the conscious self, or "I", every person also has a pathway to a "Higher Self," which is a reflection of the divine. The purpose of each human life is to participate as fully as possible in self-evolution along that pathway. The system was left open so that both individuals and any psychologists could participate in developing psychosynthesis and incorporate the various occult tools of transformation.

Assagioli founded the Institute of Psychosynthesis in 1926. He met Alice Bailey during the early 1930s, and they became friends; their organizations have retained a working association. Psychosynthesis was suppressed during World War II, and Assagioli was arrested. He spent his prison days exploring meditation and altered states of consciousness. After the war he revived his work and promoted the founding of institutes in the United States, Greece, and England.

In 1958 Assagioli became chair of the Psychosynthesis Research Foundation at Greenville, Delaware, and editor of *Psiche-Rivista di Studi Psicologici*. During his mature years, he authored a set of books which became the major statements of psychosynthesis. He died in Capaiona, Italy, on August 23, 1974.

Transpersonal Inspiration

by Roberto Assagioli, M. D.

Part One

If we were to look about us at the "signs of the times", the present state of humanity, the direction of its interests and the nature of its behavior, we should doubtless be struck by a growing polarization between two opposing tendencies. On the one hand there is an immoderate desire for and frantic pursuit of material possessions, sensuous enjoyment, mastery of nature and authority over other human beings, coupled with the inevitable accompaniments in every field of licence and self-assertiveness, individual and collective aggressiveness, and violence. On the other hand we find, displayed in a more or less overt form, a degree of dissatisfaction with that materialism, aggression and self-centeredness which, among many of the young, becomes open rebellion. This opposition is characterized by a conscious or unconscious search for different and higher values and gratifications and a longing for what is by and large termed spiritual or religious.

But the path of this search is strewn with uncertainty, confusion and misunderstanding. One notices a strange paradox in the fact that, while there is an abundance of evidence pointing to the existence of this higher sphere obtained by men and women of every age and place, it has been the object of little and largely unsatisfactory scientific research. A number of reasons account for this situation. In the first place, an erroneous conception of the scientific method is widely held, which would limit its use to the quantitative and statistical techniques suited to the natural sciences. Furthermore, the mind is reluctant to admit the existence of non-rational reality and values; it confuses the super-rational with the irrational or even anti-rational. There is also the fact that the descriptions of experiences in this higher sphere are generally couched in terms associated with religious doctrines, and employ pictures, symbols and forms no longer accepted or recognized as valid by the modern mentality. As Keyserling has said in his irreverent way, "they have been exhibited in the frames constructed out of their own prejudices."

Another difficulty stems from the inadequacies inherent in language, the incapacity of verbal expression to communicate the true nature of trans-personal experience. All who have attempted description of such experiences have affirmed that they are ineffable. This is one of the characteristics attributed to mystical experience by William James in his *Varieties of Religious Experience*.

Finally, the fear of adventuring into a different world from the common, everyday one must be reckoned with, a world that is unknown and apt to be baffling. This fear is strengthened by the frequent presentation of this "adventuring" in a negative way, usually calling for the renunciation of all that man is generally attached to, while insufficient stress is laid on its positive and joyous aspects. All this builds strong resistance and reluctance as well as what has been called the "refusal of the sublime". And yet, despite all, the dissatisfaction and search for "something other", the fascination in exploring and conquering the inner worlds, whose vivid light many have glimpsed, have had the effect of drawing large numbers to those who present themselves as "messengers" and guides in this sphere, and who collect around themselves enthusiastic and often fanatical adherents and disciples.

But wide variation in value distinguishes the messages and the competence of these guides, or "masters". Side by side with lofty and genuine teaching is proffered what is either totally spurious or contains an admixture of truth and illusion in varying proportions. Flanking the truly wise guides are to be found the false prophets who employ and teach methods that are not only worthless, but sometimes dangerous as well. Herein lie the necessity and urgency of scientific study and experimental investigation in this field: scientific in the sense of being independent of every doctrine, system and personal authority.

Studies and investigation along these lines have been initiated and are undergoing rapid development. They constitute a new branch of psychology, which has been given the name "transpersonal" and which could be termed "Height Psychology"; but this is only a beginning: a great deal remains to be done. Speaking for myself, this field has occupied my attention for many years, and I am now (June 1974) engaged on the task of coordinating and systematizing my personal contribution to the field in a book to be called *Height Psychology and the Self*. Its proposed index will convey an idea of the vastness and complexity of this field:

Introduction-The Dimensions of Psychology

1. Two-dimensional (superficial) psychology;
2. Depth Psychology;
3. Height (Transpersonal) Psychology;
4. Towards a three-dimensional, synthetic psychology.

Contents

1. Levels of the inner world;
2. The superconscious level;
3. Experience and realization;
4. Distinctive features of the "Heights"
5. The Self (summary - existential experiences and transcendental realities);
6. The seven different paths:
 - a. The religious, devotional, mystic;
 - b. The ethical, regenerative;
 - c. The aesthetic;
 - d. The path of social-humanitarian service and the heroic;
 - e. The scientific-philosophical;
 - f. The ritualistic or ceremonial;
 - g. The path of the Will.
7. Means and techniques for transpersonal realization: Descent and Ascent.

One of the principal subjects covered by this Height Psychology is the relationship between superconscious, transpersonal activities and the conscious life, or, to put it more precisely, the various modalities employed in the passage of superconscious contents and energies into the field of the ordinary waking consciousness. There are several of these modalities, and they can be indicated thus:

- I. Intuition
- II. Imagination
- III. Illumination

- IV. Revelation
- V. Inspiration
- VI. Creation
- VII. Understanding and Interpretation

They do not operate separately, but tend to act more or less contemporaneously and in combinations of varying proportions. This makes it easy to confuse one with another; which is why their scientific study requires that the distinctions and differences existing between each of them be clearly established. Differentiation of this nature is essential if their relationships and interactions are to be recognized and properly understood. This study has in its turn its various aspects and stages, which also must be kept distinct:

1. The phenomenology, i.e., the assemblage of spontaneously acquired experiences and observed facts, such as have been described and presented by a large number of witnesses of every time and place.
2. The modality of the processes by which the passage from the super-conscious to the conscious is effected.
3. The Techniques which have served, and still serve, to create and promote that passage. These include the various external and inner practices associated with the different religions, as well as those exercises which, though known by a variety of names, may be grouped under the generic title of Yoga.
4. The immediate results and the subsequent effects proceeding from them.
5. The methods for alerting dangers and redressing potential damage caused by the "descent" or by the irruption of transpersonal energies.
6. The ways of making better and more fruitful use of these realizations and energies.

Let us first of all consider the various modalities referred to above, by which the superconscious elements and activities effect passage into the field of consciousness.

I. INTUITION

Here a distinction must be made between the intuition as a psychic function and the results of its action, that is, the intuitions which have different characteristics. The commonly given definition of the word is etymologically derived from "in-tueri", meaning to see into. It is the sight, the immediate perception of an object apprehended in its individual reality. As a specific, autonomous cognitive function, the intuition is widely known and has been recognized in both the East and the West.

Self-styled scientific psychology, on the contrary, has not acknowledged its validity as a medium of consciousness, owing to its restricted and unilateral conception of the field and methods of science, or has identified it with direct sensuous perception of external stimuli. But a reaction against this unjustified exclusivism has materialized and is continuing. The two major champions of the validity and value of intuition have been Bergson and Keyserling. Though regarded and classed as philosophers, they both possessed an exceptionally discriminating psychic sense based on the intuition, and in Keyserling's case, on a profound capacity for empathy and self-identification with others. They thus made invaluable contributions to the knowledge of the human mind, contributions which the new scientific psychology will have to take duly into account.

In the strictly psychological field, credit is due to Jung for affirming the existence and validity of the intuition as a specific and autonomous psychic function. He says this about it:

I regard intuition as a basic psychological function. It is the function that mediates perceptions in an unconscious way. Everything, whether outer or inner objects or their relationships, can be the focus of this perception. The peculiarity of intuition is that it is neither sense perception, nor feeling, nor intellectual inference, although it may also appear in these forms. In intuition a content presents itself whole and complete, without our being able to explain or discover how this content came into existence. Intuition is a kind of instinctive apprehension, no matter of what contents. Like sensation, it is an irrational function of perception. As with sensation, its contents have the character of being given, in contrast to the "derived" or "produced" character of thinking and feeling contents. Intuitive knowledge possesses an intrinsic certainty and conviction, which enabled Spinoza (and Bergson) to uphold the *scientia intuitiva* as the highest form of knowledge. Intuition shares this quality with sensation, whose certainty rests on its physical foundation. The certainty of intuition rests equally on a definite state of psychic "alertness" of whose origin the subject is unconscious.

Page 413, *Psychological Types*, C. C. Jung. (Bollinger Series XX, Princeton University Press, 1971.)

He terms it irrational, a designation that lends itself to misunderstanding, since it could be interpreted as contrary to reason, whereas in reality it is simply different, but not in opposition. It might well be called pararational, or, better, trans-rational.

The types of intuition are three in number. There are first of all the sensory intuitions associated with the conscious perception of visual, auditory, tactile, etc., impressions produced by stimuli originating in the environment. This class

need not detain us, as it is limited to personal psychic levels and does not concern the superconscious.

Then we have intuitions of ideas, in the Platoistic sense, and since these come from a higher region than that in which the ordinary mind functions, they may be considered to be transpersonal. The same can be said of the third kind of higher intuition, that is to say the aesthetic, the religious, the mystical and even the scientific (for instance, those of higher mathematics). This denotes the difference between the personal psychological and the transpersonal life.

Intuitions present themselves to the consciousness, or are perceived by it, in two ways. The first, which adheres more closely, to the etymological meaning, can be described as the opening of an "inner eye", thus permitting the "sight" or perception of some reality inaccessible to normal mental vision. The other way is characterized by a brilliant, lightning-like flash of light, which, "descending" into the field of consciousness, is perceived by the "I", the centre of consciousness at its normal level or "seat". A common and specific characteristic of intuitions is their "authenticity". They convey the perception of their object in its totality, like an organic whole, and thereby differ from the mental consciousness, which is analytical. Keyserling points this out clearly in the following passage from *De la pensée aux sources*:

Man, like all animals, is intimately linked to the total mass of beings and things, and if instinct is lacking in him or is so atrophied that he cannot depend upon his elementary impulses, then the human equivalent of instinct must intervene in order that man may freely orient himself in the COSMOS. In this sense only the intuitives are free: and that is why they alone provide all the great revealers, the leaders and the innovators.

As Keyserling says, the intuition displays another specific characteristic, its orientation towards becoming, towards the future:

The intuition penetrates the veils of the future and, therefore, of the possible. But reality is in perpetual transformation, and therefore only he is able to see it who grasps directly what from time to time is possible, and this in a double sense. Firstly, because above all the facts some 'possibilities' exist; and in the second place, because he perceives directly, among the possibilities, those which at times and in determined conditions, can be realized. Both can be derived only from a primordial interior experience of the all (totality).

This points to the intuition's capacity to pass beyond the acquisition of knowledge about an object's every quality to capture its very essence, i.e., what it IS. Thus the intuition qualifies as one of the fields of investigation of the new psychology of Being, in which Maslow was the pioneer.

II. IMAGINATION

That the imagination has a close relationship with the intuition is evidenced by the fact that intuitions often do not present themselves to the consciousness in an abstract, simple and "pure" way, but rather in the guise of images. This entails a primary task of distinguishing the content, the essence, the idea inherent in an intuition from the form, the vestments, so to speak, which it assumes. The character of the form being symbolic, the complex and important question of symbolism arises. As I have dealt with this elsewhere I shall limit myself here to emphasizing the twofold and, in a certain sense, contrasting nature and function of the symbol. It can both veil and reveal. When mistaken for the reality that it expresses, it veils it and is thus a source of illusion. When recognized for what it is, a means of expression, it constitutes a useful and at times indispensable aid to "catching" and then illuminating a transcendental reality.

Independently of its cognitive function as a means and vehicle of the intuition, the imagination displays several other and different aspects. There is first of all simple reproductive imagination, that is, the vehicle of memory-pictures of sensations and impressions already experienced (mnemonic images). While the visual is the most frequent of these, memory images of other sense-mediated impressions abound, the most important being the aural. Latent and stored in what may be termed the "records of the unconscious", they can surface spontaneously into consciousness, or be re-evoked by the will. The capacity to store and recall images is immense, one might say practically unlimited. Under certain conditions (hypnotic and feverish states) detailed memories of events occurring in early childhood can rise to the surface of consciousness. There are, again, the prodigies of memory exhibited by some great orchestral conductors (notably Toscanini) whose ability to remember entire symphonies and operas enabled them to conduct a work without reference to the score. Equally surprising is the way some advanced chess players can visualize the positions and moves of the pieces and play a number of simultaneous games without seeing the boards. Then there is creative imagination: its great importance is insufficiently recognized and its power little utilized, especially in education. As I shall be enlarging on this later when dealing with creativity, I wish at this point simply to make a passing reference to dreams, which are a mixed product of the two types of imagination: reproductive and creative.

III. ILLUMINATION

One of the ways in which the superconscious manifests most frequently in the consciousness is illumination, which follows the opening of the "inner eye". Although intuition and illumination have a close affinity, each presents points of difference. In a general way an intuition can be said to be an illuminative flash concerning some particular aspect or manifestation of Reality. But illumination

is something more expansive and enduring; it is a vision that reveals the essential nature and synthetic unity of the whole of Reality, or of some of its major aspects. It is the perception of a "light" which, emanating from Reality itself, is different from physical light. Much evidential testimony relating to this experience is contained in William James' *Varieties of Religious Experience* and Winslow Hall's *Observed Illuminates*. This type of illumination may be regarded as the revelation of divine immanence, of the unity of the Universal Life as it manifests through myriads of forms. Its most pertinent description is that contained in Book X of the *Bhagavada Gita*, in which it is termed the "Revelation of the Universal Form".

A number of poets have had and tried to express this experience of illumination, the greatest of them being Dante, who fills the "Paradise" of his *Divine Comedy* with expressions of light. At the beginning of the Canto he clearly claims to have undergone the ineffable experience of the loftiest Light, the light that pervades the highest level, the "heaven" closest to the Supreme Reality which is God.

In the consciousness of its percipients, manifestation of the light assumes different aspects; or rather, different aspects of light dominate according to the individual, since they are not separate but interpenetrate and fuse in varying proportions. Sometimes, as in the case of Tagore, the cognitive aspect is overriding. In the Christian as well as the Eastern mystics it is associated with feelings of love and adoration. In others it arouses a sense of joy, which may reach ecstatic bliss. But, I repeat, it is a matter of the prevalence of one or other of these aspects. In general all are present to a certain extent.

IV REVELATION

A type of illuminative experience different from those mentioned so far is the "flash" of consciousness, often a sudden perception, of what a human being is, in which an individual experiences a revelation of himself. This revelation can have various, sometimes opposite, features and effects. The first, of a strongly positive nature, is the vision of the wonderful potentialities latent or active on the superconscious levels. They can yield a dazzling revelatory flash of the spiritual Self. This is accompanied by a new understanding, a true comprehension, of the self and of others. The consciousness, while experiencing a sense of enlargement and expansion, is suffused by feelings of joy, goodness, love and gratitude. Even this revelation, however, if unexpected, sudden and over-intense, can produce undesirable and even unhealthy reactions. It can generate a sensation of excitation and exaltation. In cases where awareness of the difference between the spiritual Self and the personal "I" is lacking, the latter may attribute to itself the qualities and power of the former, with megalomania as the possible end product.

The other, reverse, aspect of inner illumination is the revelation of the inferior, dark features of the personality, hitherto ignored or unrecognized, or more or less negated and repressed in the subconscious. They constitute what Jung calls the "shadow". When experienced without warning, this revelation can prove emotionally unbalancing, being often exacerbated by depressive states, fear and even despair. The prevention, or at least abatement, of such effects is responsive to a prior psychological preparation. The key to this preparation is a knowledge of depth psychology, which cushions the shock of surprise and assists the acceptance of the revelation by exposing the truth that the dark features of the personality form part of the general human condition.

Other reactions, less extreme but still damaging, can be experienced at the emotional as well as the physical level, should the nervous system not tolerate the intensity, or "voltage", of the irruptive psycho-spiritual energies. I have written of this in my monograph, "Self-Realization and Psychological Disturbances", incorporated in *Psychosynthesis - A Manual of Principles and Techniques*, (N.Y., Hobbs, Dorman & Co., 1965). Here I shall confine myself to saying that in this case, also, a preventive aware-ness of the different levels of human nature, as afforded by "three dimensional psychology", can lessen and help tolerate the reactions in question, as well as indicate the methods of eliminating them.

V. INSPIRATION

VI. CREATION

Inspiration and psycho-spiritual creation represent other types of relationship and interaction between the superconscious and consciousness. It is of importance to reach a realization of the differences existing between illumination, inspiration, and creation, and keep them clearly defined, as they are often confused. illumination can confer inspirations and often does so, but not always. With some mystics illumination remains subjective and may create a contemplative state. It often unleashes a rush of love and aspiration to become united with God, to fuse oneself with the Supreme Reality; but it does not necessarily inspire external expression or instigate action.

On the other hand there is the type of inspiration which takes place without illumination, elevation and expansion of consciousness. Most composers experience it at one time or another, but Mozart testified to the frequency with which it virtually "dictated" his works from early childhood on. A distinct difference is to be noted between inspiration and creation. In its deeper sense inspiration denotes the process whereby more or less elaborated contents pass or descend from transpersonal levels, from the superconscious, into the field of consciousness. Creation is, rather, a process whereby these contents are

elaborated prior to their descent or appearance in consciousness. Creation is thus analogous to the conception and gestation of a new organism in the maternal uterus, inspiration being analogous to the birth or emergence of the creature.

The "birth" can occur at various stages of the elaboration. In some cases the product enters the consciousness clearly formulated and complete, equipped to pursue an autonomous existence, as occurs biologically in the case of many animals. In others, it "surfaces" in a crude, unfinished state, needing to be worked on, sometimes extensively, by the conscious "I" until it acquires an adequate form. Analogously to physical parturition, the birth is sometimes spontaneous, rapid and easy, and accompanied by a feeling of joy. Yet it can be difficult, protracted and painful.

VII. UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETATION

In a certain sense this is the most important stage, for it gives significance to all that precedes it. Intuitions, illuminations and the revelations they produce must be properly understood if erroneous interpretations, faulty applications, and inappropriate and even harmful actions are to be avoided. These types of error are so frequently encountered that quotable examples of them abound. I shall, however, refer only to two extremely common classes; one consisting of misinterpretations of impulses or inner "commands" to act; the other of mental failure to grasp truths which appear in the field of consciousness. An outstanding example of the first type is a well-known episode in the life of St. Francis. Shortly after his conversion, while engaged in prayer, he heard an inner voice telling him to "go and restore my Church". Aware that there was nearby a small abandoned church, he interpreted the message as a divine command to repair it, which he proceeded to do. Only later did he understand that the words carried another and far wider meaning. the revelation concerned a mission to restore the Catholic Church, then passing through a phase of conspicuous decadence. How admirably he fulfilled this mission is common knowledge.

An example of the second type, totally dissimilar in character, has to do with a very different sort of man. It concerns the flashing revelation that Friedrich Nietzsche had of the great cycles which unfold in the eternity of the cosmic becoming. He interpreted and expressed this revelation in his theory of the "eternal return". He argued that, time being without limit, while the number of existing material atoms, however vast, is finite, and their possible combinations are necessarily finite, it follows that sooner or later these combinations must recur and reappear as they were before, repeating the process ad infinitum. This discouraging doctrine was the natural outcome of an erroneous premise which held that the number of atoms was finite and invariable. Leaving aside the inherent absurdity of this hypothesis, it has been confuted by the demonstration by modern physics that the atoms of matter are continually disintegrating, to

form new ones with different properties. What Nietzsche had intuited was the cyclic nature of cosmic manifestation, of the evolutionary process. This corresponds to the Eastern conception of the great cycles governing the appearance and disappearance of the worlds-in other words, of the periodic emergence of matter, its evolution in innumerable forms (Manvantara), and finally its reabsorption into the spirit, the unmanifest (Pralaya). Recent discoveries in astronomy of the formation and dissolution of stars and galaxies fully confirm this conception. Applying it to the human scale, Eastern beliefs interpret it in terms of the cyclic manifestation of the soul in a series of bodies (reincarnation). But none of that implies an identical return, but rather points to a reappearance in progressively finer forms, an evolution following an ascending spiral. This misconception on the part of Nietzsche affords a striking example of how an originally correct intuition can be misinterpreted.

The psychological field is the scene of a never-ending series of problems associated with symbol interpretation, and one in which confusion and error are continually cropping up. A particularly fertile round for misunderstanding is the symbolism employed in dreams and myths, as well as that appearing in artistic and literary works. While these errors often derive from the preconceptions and private theories of those who interpret, a further difficulty stems from the proneness of symbols to carry different meanings at different levels of reality, without their coining into conflict or being mutually exclusive. This should always be borne in mind.

Notes

1. See "Symbols of Transpersonal Experiences", *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, Spring, 1969; or Reprint 11, Psychosynthesis Research Foundation, N.Y. 1969.

Smiling Wisdom

by Roberto Assagioli, M.D.

The ancients greatly appreciated laughter, which they looked upon as a divine gift and a helpful remedy. There never was a time when such a remedy was more needed than now....

There are, above all, three things which modern man must learn in order to become a sane and complete being: the art of resting, the art of contemplation, the art of laughing and smiling. Here we shall briefly consider the latter, and primarily its superior and spiritual aspects.

The value of this art is manifold. Laughing has first of all a direct salutary effect upon our bodies. It is known that laughing produces rapid rhythmical contractions of the diaphragm. These rhythmical contractions have a healthful effect on the abdominal organs, stimulating their functions and activating the digestive secretions, especially those of the liver. They also modify the rhythm of breathing, stimulate the pulmonary function and the activity of the heart and thereby produce a better oxidization. The popular proverb which says that "laughing makes good blood" is therefore scientifically accurate.

But the psychological value of laughter is much greater. Laughter removes the inner tension with consequent great relief to the individual; it brings with it a beneficent release and replaces the activity of tired faculties by the fresh use of others which had been little, too little, employed. When one is tired or excited, it is easier to relax through laughter than through outer inactivity, during which the mind continues to pursue "in the void" its feverish activity.

Another useful function of laughter consists in it being a harmless and happy outlet for repressed tendencies, especially the tendency to play, which has remained alive in us and which we do not take enough into consideration. Too early and too harshly do we repress "the little child" which dwells in us with its fresh gaiety and its need for free and happy playing. But this urge to play can be re-awakened; it can bloom once more and exhilarate us, like a stream of fresh and pure water that issues from a mountain crevice.

Laughter can, and should be extensively and "earnestly" applied in education. It has great value, especially in furthering intellectual development. Contrast, surprises, unexpected conclusions, which are among the most important causes producing laughter, awaken and sharpen our intellectual processes and thereby enable us to notice many things which otherwise might easily have escaped our attention. For instance, queer and ludicrous comparisons and resemblances, or the comical combination of facts which are different and heterogeneous,

emphasize the common characteristics in things that are otherwise dissimilar, and the similarities in those which in other respects are quite different. They give us new perspectives, enable us to discover the curious relationship existing between various groups of facts, thereby sharpening our faculty of observation, and bringing new ideas to birth in us; in short, they render our intellectual mechanism more active and more alert.

This stimulating influence is, paradoxically, associated with a restful one. The nervous discharge produced by laughter diminishes excessive intellectual tension and re-establishes the balance upset by too intense effort.

It is often desirable -- if one knows how to do it -- to teach pupils in ways that will make them laugh, for laughter has a property which is very useful, -- that of increasing the pupil's attention. As is well known, one of the main difficulties in teaching lies precisely in attracting and holding the student's attention and keeping him interested in the things he is being taught. Equally great is the value of laughter for understanding and remembering the things learned. Modern psychology has proved how wrong it is to make a student learn by heart, and memorize mechanically, abstract definitions instead of showing him by concrete examples the nature and the practical consequences of a fact or a group of facts. The comical can be of real help in this, owing to the precision and the vivacity of the images and ideas it arouses.

Thanks to its mnemonic value laughter is very useful in facilitating the study of arid subjects that are based primarily on memory. There exists, for instance, a French book on anatomy in which the subject is dealt with amusingly, and I recall having used it with pleasure when I studied that dry science. In the same way can the amusing *Chemistry in Verses* by Alberto Cavaliere be of great aid in remembering the properties of various chemical substances.

Laughter can be particularly helpful in the teaching of languages, by rendering alive their study which is so boring and dry if they are taught according to the pedantic grammatical method still in use in many schools. In conclusion, our motto should be study and teach with joy.

Laughter can also have great moral and spiritual value. I said "can have", for assuredly not every kind of laughter has that quality. It is therefore necessary to distinguish clearly between the different types and "levels" of laughter. There is the vulgar, gross laughter, a simple enjoyment of the instincts which, alas, is only too widespread. Then there are sarcasm, contempt, mockery, which can be called "acidified laughter" and which may produce dangerous psychological auto-intoxication. Then there is, finally, the simple inoffensive, comical laughter, such as is produced by puns, limericks, etc., which has no moral value and does not pretend to have any.

The spiritual value of laughter depends on the intention of the one who arouses it. There exist, for instance, literary expressions of the comical, such as satire, parody and comedy which sometimes can have social and ethical value if their purpose is to denounce hypocrisy and immorality or to unmask pretensions and vanities. Remarkable examples of this function of the comical are Moliere's comedies and Orwell's satires.

This leads on to the higher and spiritual aspects of true humour. It is very difficult to define humour because of its subtle and elusive nature and because it assumes different forms and colours itself with countless shades. However, without imprisoning it in a formula, it is possible to indicate its most outstanding characteristics. Let us quote first some apt remarks by Guido Stacchini:

Humour is like an intimate smile of the soul which, if one knows how to feel it, never becomes exhausted and never peters out; it is a superior joy where the best part of ourself feels itself raised to a higher level and experiences the entire spiritual satisfaction of being, at the same time, actor and judge.

The individual adopts a humorous attitude especially towards himself, as a means to overcome suffering, that is to say, he succeeds in treating himself as if he were a child, and at the same time he adopts toward that capricious and irresponsible child the superior role of the experienced adult.

This means has a wider application relative to the lives of other people. When the adult recognizes the vanity of the interests and sufferings which seem important to the child (in him), he ridicules them, and thus puts things into their right place, giving them the value which belongs to them. In those cases the adult is the humorist, the child is the average human being, or the public.

These subtle remarks by Stacchini help us to understand and appreciate the great spiritual value of humour. The pains and anxieties which harass man, the big and little mistakes he makes unceasingly, derive largely from his passionate attachment to persons and to things; they are due also to his total lack of the sense of proportion which induces him to attribute enormous importance to things that are vain, empty and artificial, and he therefore neglects the things that are great and precious, the things that are real and eternal.

The noble function of humour is precisely to dissipate those illusions, to devalue the objects of those attachments, to unmask that ignorance, to put things and persons back where they belong. Humour can do this because as Plato with deep intuition expressed it "Ridiculous is he who does not know himself."

One of the human weaknesses which lends itself best to the arrows of humour and which deserves them most, for it is so strongly rooted and so widespread that it can be found even in people of real value is vanity. The adult, through the mere fact of being one, generally entertains the strange illusion that he has reached his goal. He is satisfied with himself and it does not occur to him that, as soon as he has finished school he should enter the greater and real school of life, that he should "take himself in hand" and begin his self-education. Instead, as Stacchini so well expresses it, "the age which is supposed to be the age of reason is the one where one begins to commit serious stupidities."

How blinding vanity is! As Schopenhauer says: "As unfailingly as the cat begins to purr when its back is stroked, so unfailingly does one see a sweet ecstasy appear on a man's face who is praised, particularly when the praise concerns his pretensions, even if such praise is a flagrant lie."

Vanity often is accompanied by presumption which, among other ways, shows itself by contempt for those who are a little lower on the social ladder and by flattery toward those who are at its top. These pretentious people behave as did the glass lamp of which Rabindranath Tagore tells in one of his fine and profound aphorisms contained in "Stray Birds"

While the glass lamp rebukes the earthen for calling it cousin, the moon rises and the glass lamp with a bland smile, calls her "My dear, dear sister."

Then there are cases where those that are small seek to raise themselves by belittling and lowering those who are great, but their efforts are in vain, for their ridicule and contempt fall back upon themselves, as Tagore expresses it in another of his Stray Bird aphorisms:

The learned say that your lights will one day be no more, said the firefly to the stars. The stars made no answer.

A weakness which often appears comical is fear... and a common form is anxiety about the future. How many needless worries men create for themselves! Their pessimistic provisions and excessive precautions are wittily expressed and derided in this Tuscan saying: "Don't bandage your head before it gets hurt."

Still another kind of fear is worry about the opinion of others. How often people poison their lives by anxiously trying to avoid any blame or criticism! Yet, the impossibility of satisfying everybody has been known since time immemorial. We read in the *Dhammapada*, a Buddhist text which originated several centuries before Christ:

This saying is ancient, oh Atula, and by no means of today: he who is silent is spoken ill of, and he who talks much is spoken ill of.

Also he who talks little is blamed. Nobody in this world is exempt from criticism.

Among numerous mistakes a subtle and not obvious, but no less real, one is made by certain intellectuals and philosophers who spend themselves in vain discussions of purely academic interest, when there are urgent spiritual tasks to be accomplished as long as true liberty has not been achieved. This folly was brilliantly derided by Buddha:

It is said in the Majjhimanikaya that the monk Malunkjaputta one time went to see the Buddha and expressed to him his dissatisfaction about his not telling his disciples whether the world was eternal or non-eternal, infinite or finite, etc.... The monk went so far in his effrontery as to present to the Buddha a challenge. He demanded that the Buddha should either reply with a yes or no to his questions, or to admit that he was incapable of so doing. In the former case, the monk declared himself disposed to remain his disciple, in the latter he would return to the life of the world. The Buddha, without losing his serenity for a single instant, answered him thus: A man has been wounded by a poison arrow, and his friends call the doctor. If the wounded man said, "I shall not permit this arrow to be torn out of me before knowing who the man is that has wounded me, which is his family, what he looks like, whether he is tall or short, dark or fair, and where he lives," he would certainly die before it were possible to help him. This exactly would happen to one who, before entering the road to liberation, would demand that he be given a reply to all his questions.

If we ask ourselves what the typical attitude of the humorist is, we can reply that he regards human life on earth essentially as a theatrical performance, a "comedy" in which everyone must play his part as well as he possibly can, without taking it too seriously, and, above all, be ever conscious that he is playing.

Spiritual humour is a paradoxical combination of an attitude of serene and detached observation, the feeling of the oneness of life, and deep sympathy for and compassion with others. "The humorist," writes Prof. Fanciulli in his essay on humour, "is to the highest degree gifted with the ability of living the life of others.... He feels the ties which bind all things. Plurality is relative., perhaps only seeming; all parts are linked to each other by ties which cannot be broken. ... An admirable synthesis is effected...; the pain and pleasure of others become the pain and pleasure of the self. This sympathy has the quality of tenderness. It partakes of the sufferings of the weak, of the conquered, of the poor."

But this sympathy is always conscious and serene and does not prevent what Fanciulli justly regards as the typical attitude of humour, namely the smile. All this and more hides and reveals itself in the smile of the liberated Buddha, a smile full of compassion, but a smile born of the certainty that the way to salvation exists, and that all human beings, sooner or later, will reach liberation and bliss.

It should be stated that all things, even the best, can be misused, and it is precisely the task of "the art of living" to use all things to good purpose and in right proportions. As to humour, let us remember that its function is similar to that of salt in food, a seasoning which gives savour to the life which is our portion, but that salt in itself is no nourishment.

From another angle, humour is the contemplation of the passing pageant of life; it is not direct and active participation in events. However, the complete human being, the true sage, is not he who confines himself to contemplation, and even less he who is wholly absorbed in and by action. He is a sage who, while living, suffering and beneficently working with one part of himself, keeps his higher and real Self a detached and smiling spectator.

To attain such a state of inner freedom, it is necessary to use humour first of all toward oneself, gently making fun of one's little personal self which is so full of its own importance, giving itself such airs and taking itself so seriously, and which is touchy, restless and suspicious.

What Giuseppe Zucca has so aptly called "the steel cabin" of the self cannot long resist -- however hard and thick its walls may be -- the subtle penetrating and consuming flame of humour; sooner or later its door opens and man can free himself from that narrow and suffocating prison. When that happens, one can say that the greatest achievement has been reached. The soul spreads its wings and joyously, with a divine smile, unites itself with the other souls, with all creatures and with God.

Notes on Education (1968)

by Dr. Roberto Assagioli

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Introduction

The subject of education is of such fundamental importance, of such vital interest to everyone of us, and covers such a vast field with all of its varied aspects, that we feel it opportune to devote this study to it (even though it is merely a partial one) and to train ourselves in reflective meditation on such a

subject, and to indicate, in particular, the lines of development and objectives along which we must concentrate our creative action.

It is difficult to assess the outer results of our meditation especially with regard to their wider and more long-term effects, but we may trust, or even better, we can have a strong faith that such results are assured. and inevitable, because energy follows thought, and thought directed by the will, and animated, by feeling, is creative.

In the midst of the world events that are rapidly unfolding, and of the whirl and pressure of outer activity, we must remember that all visible, material events have inner causes stemming from the imagination from thought, and from the will. Hold this firmly in your awareness and live accordingly; spread its acceptance; apply it with persistence in promoting the new forms that will be taking the place of the old ones.

I. The Meaning of Education (Semantics)

The first thing we must do in order to approach our subject (as must be done in dealing with any topic) is to define its true nature and meaning in clear terms; i.e. to make a terminological (semantic) specification. It is particularly necessary to do this in the case of education so that we may become aware of the existence of a basic misunderstanding, or confusion that must be eliminated.

Education has often been considered as synonymous to "instruction," i.e. the imparting of knowledge and information. Up until a short time ago and even now) the majority of schools of all levels has aimed, more or less openly, at such a goal, and has intended to carry out such a function. That education, in the true meaning of the word, is something quite different, something that is much more inclusive, and that in a certain sense, even has the opposite meaning!

Instruction means to infuse, to put something in that is lacking, to fill a vacuum. The etymological meaning of the word "education", however, means to "draw out" (from the Latin "educere")...to lead, to draw out that which is within; i.e. to bring to light what is hidden, to render actual what is only potential, to develop.

It also means to draw out of conditions that limit; in other words, it is the favouring of a process of growth. Of course, education also includes the imparting of ideas, but this must be seen only as a first step or stage, as an instrument or necessary means, and not as an end in itself. Both aspects and concepts are included in the common usage of the word "education", and this easily creates confusion and misunderstandings. It would, therefore, be useful to distinguish between them and to always specify, for example, by using the terms "informative education" and "formative education".

II. The Educational Crisis

The distinction between the two concepts offers us the key to understanding the crisis now existing in the field of education.

The concept of "imparting something from the outside", along with the corresponding traits of authority and control on the teacher's side and the imposition of programs, is in direct contrast to the tendencies now rapidly coming to the fore.

The above-mentioned contrast has produced a revolution against traditional educational methods. New methods shifting the "centre of gravity" from the teacher to the pupil, have been proposed and put into practice.

Psychoanalysis, with its emphasis on the harmful effects of repression and censure, has also substantially contributed to this radical change. Thus, great progress has been made; children and young people are now treated with more understanding and are given greater opportunities to develop more freely. That the revolution in the field of education (as what almost always happens with revolutions) has gone too far, arriving at the opposite extreme in some cases. The elimination of all discipline, every rule, all help on the teacher's part has produced results that are undesirable and at times, even disastrous, both within the family and at school; disorder, anarchy, lack of self discipline, and violent behaviour have been its effects. Furthermore, the fact that has most astounded the "reformers" has been that this regime of freedom without limits has proven unnatural; they have come to realize that even the children themselves do not want it and often ask for guidance, precise rules, a certain amount of discipline and order, and that they most of all want "models" and living examples. That this fact should not be surprising. It has been found that even adults find it difficult to bear freedom, and while they often fight to obtain it, they basically do not really want it; they are ready to give it up and even seek to run away from it. This paradoxical behaviour helps us understand many recent events and has been pointed out in Erich Fromm's books Escape From Freedom (amongst others).

The poor results caused by exaggerated applications of the new educational methods have given rise to a counter reaction, but this has not solved the problem. All attempts to return to the "good old methods of the past" are in vain, and are destined to fail, both due to the fact that those methods were not really "good", and because their imposition has been rendered impossible given the profound changes that have occurred in the psychology of the new generation and in the environmental conditions. In the meantime, the rapid increase in the number of students, the tumultuous extension of "mass education" in the form of compulsory education (something which is both desirable and necessary), and

the resulting scarcity of competent teachers and adequate schools, have created new and serious difficulties and complications. All this explains the current crisis in the field of education, where the old and the new are found in different proportions, side by side, and often, in sharp contrast with one another. The more enlightened educators have recently recognized the need of finding a "middle road" and have been carrying out experiments in this direction. This is constructive and promising progress. But to arrive at truly satisfactory methods, one must take into full consideration the new tendencies emerging today, tendencies that continue to characterize, more and more, the future direction.

What has been said until now indicates how important it is to discern and to establish the main lines along which an education adequate to the new conditions and needs, must be developed. But first let us specifically deal with the defect considered most serious in present-day education., that is, the excessive importance given to scholastic education and the consequent relative lack of education in the family, thus giving rise to serious deficiencies. In part, this is due to the already mentioned confusion. between "instruction" and true education, and in part to the real difficulties which exist in carrying out an adequate family education. These are made worse by the present conditions which often deprive children of the attention. and cooperation that is their due. This is particularly true for the father because his time and energies are very often absorbed by the pressing demands of supporting his family. But the deep conviction that children cannot do without an adequate education within the heart of the family, and that it is their right to receive it, should induce all parents. to face those difficulties and to seek seriously to overcome them.

The great and often decisive importance attributed by psychoanalysts to the first years of life and to their imprint on the future personality, has been acknowledged by many educators. Not only do traumatic experiences, brought to light by psychoanalytic research, seriously¹⁷ hinder all future development and the formation of the personality, but so does the lack of certain, indispensable positive elements, such as love, understanding, training, guidance, and a sense of security as well.

III. The New Trends and Education

1. Dynamism and a Positive Viewpoint

The close interrelationship between these two trends permits us to deal with them together. Both are the incentives of the "active methods" of the new education and are evident in it. These include:

- a. Direct contact with nature and with living beings :earth, water, plants, animals, and related activities...to sow, cultivate and raise domestic animals.
- b. Specific material for didactic purposes (Frobel, Montessori, Decroly, etc.), or objects, tools and machines for general use.
- c. Cooperation in family activities and the carrying out of domestic chores.
- d. The execution of set projects (for example, a school building was constructed by a group of teachers and students in a mountainous region. of the USA, using tree trunks. Work makes them use their intelligence and acquire a vast field of concepts and many manual capabilities.)
- e. Group activities of various kinds experiments and training in self-government of the school community, etc. All this can be put into the general formula: LEARN BY DOING EDUCATION THROUGH ACTIVE TRAINING.

These methods constitute real progress and improvement in education, and we can predict that their techniques will be perfected and used more and more widely as time goes on. They are in harmony with the other trends of unification and synthesis, mental development, extraversion, and can always be combined and integrated to an ever greater extent.

Dynamism also has another effect. A change is now occurring in education and is one that will continue to be stressed the traditional, unrealistic ideal of a static "model" is being replaced by the concept of life as a process of development and of maturation. The goal of a. theoretical normality accepted up to now, along with its resulting "conformism", will give way to the appreciation of creativity, and education will be considered a continuous and limitless process. This means that the education of a young person, rather than ending with high school, or even with university courses, must continue in the form of self-education for the rest of his life.

The active methods, permeated. and rendered more alive by dynamism, also offer (in addition to their generally acknowledged effectiveness) a specific advantage of even greater value: they aid in the development of the will and of its right use.

The recognition. that the will is of utmost importance, that it is the most direct expression of the Self in the personality, that its power is wonderful, but that its misuse is responsible for many dangers, will enable the will to be given a central place in education.

We find in the above one of the main points of contrast between the past educational methods and those that are new. In the past, educators have aimed at dominating the child's will and at making him obedient. Obedience was the

fundamental virtue impressed upon the child. It is merely redundant to point out the poor results of such an education, all the more because it has now been made impossible by the absolute refusal of today's youth to accept it! They may seek guidance, help and cooperation, and they often ask for it (and educators should be ready to give it with competence); they can be persuaded to change their attitude.

The education of the Will implies a clear concept of what the will is and of its various stages:

1. Evocation of the will
2. Its right orientation
3. Its wise and effective application through use of appropriate techniques.

Special importance will be given to the development of the Will-to-Good and of the Will-to-Serve.

2. Mental Development

This does not only consist of a quantitative increase in mental activity, but refers to different ways of using the mind, bringing about a change in quality. Up until a short while ago, these ways were the privilege of a few philosophers and scientists but now that they are beginning to be diffused to the general public it is necessary that they be adequately acknowledged, more widely adopted and applied. in the field of education. The various activities and applications of the mind may be briefly described as follows:

1. The first function of the mind is to synthesize the sensorial impressions so that the individual may acquire an intelligent experience of the so-called. outer world. In this regard. the mind can be considered. as a sixth sense, a common sense, that coordinates and interprets the messages transmitted by the other five.
2. The second function is to collect information, to render the fruits of the experience of humanity one's own, and thus to avail oneself of the cultural inheritance of the past. This goal is reached through study, and the imparting of this kind of knowledge was the principal task of the teachers of the past.
3. The third., and higher type of mental activity is that which elaborates the material gathered during the preceding phases, coordinates it, draws conclusions and applies them; this may be called. to think or to reflect.
4. The fourth function of the mind is to be receptive to intuitions, to understand and interpret them with accuracy, and then to formulate them with precision.

5. The fifth is the creative function. The dynamic and creative power of thought discovered recently -- (it would be more exact to say "rediscovered") is being more and more acknowledged and put to use, but it is being used. especially for the attainment of personal goals (the achievement of wealth success etc.). One of the tasks of the new education will be to train the individual in the use of techniques. that harness this power for constructive goals and for the service of humanity.

The relationships between the mind and the other psychological functions, impulses, emotions, feelings and. imagination, are all but satisfactory, and pose problems of fundamental importance to education.

In the majority of humanity, the mind is subordinate to the impulses and the emotions and is used to justify them and to aid in achieving; their ends, One can say in such a case that the mind is the servant of desire. But sooner or later the unsatisfactory and often disastrous results of this erroneous relationship provoke a crisis which is then followed by either gradual or sudden changes. The mind reawakens in the individual the understanding of the nature and effects of his/her emotions and impulses. He/she becomes conscious of the distortions of reality of the illusions thus created, and of the errors of judgment, evaluation and behaviour caused by them.

It is probable that two results come from this recognition: the first which is "good", leads to the development of objectivity and of the intellectual capacity that characterize the scientific spirit. Along this line, one of the most recent advances made is in. the refinement of the scientific method, due to the work of the new science of semantics.

The second result, which is not a. desirable one, is an undervaluing of the emotions, feelings and imagination, leading to mental pride, to one sidedness and to the repressions that characterize the "arrogant intellectual" type.

Education must have two major goals with relation to the mind; to promote its development and active use, and to establish the right proportions as well as a. constructive cooperation between the mind and the other aspects of man. What is most necessary in this regard is the harmonious combination of intelligence and love, leading to loving understanding and to the development of wisdom.

3. Extraversion

It is not surprising that this tendency, favoured as it is above all other characteristics of our epoch, is pre-eminent -- so much so that it has become exaggerated and has taken. on excessive forms in some cases. The intensity of the force aimed. at gaining personal success, wealth, social position the

exaggerated. importance given to the creation of things, excessive noises of every kind, the mania of speed. without any real purpose -- these are facts that produce serious imbalances, and are the causes of the physical, nervous and psychic disturbances so widespread at this time, and of the social conflicts and decline in the areas of morality and spirituality. This can be considered one of the most serious problems at this moment.

It is especially in this field that education must carry out an equalizing and constructive work. All suitable means must be used to educate young people toward a. simple life, one that conforms to the various rhythms of nature and of life itself, and to their own harmonious alternation of activity and rest. The recognition and appreciation of inner realities will be promoted with equal persistence, thus helping young people to explore and to conquer the psychological, as well as the spiritual world, by teaching them the appropriate techniques and training them in their use.

The first step (a comparatively easy one) consists in teaching the inner make up of man, thus enabling young people to know themselves first as human beings and then, each one, as a unique individual with. specific characteristics and particular gifts an potentialities. This teaching can be facilitated, by two important additions to the present programs:

1. Psychology, the science that studies man in his totality, should occupy the place that is its due -- that of a major subject of study in every type and grade of school. This teaching can be started from the earliest years if presented in a suitable form.
2. The normal interest that every individual has for himself makes him willingly accept the opportunity to learn how to know himself. In addition, the obvious usefulness of the techniques which aim to eliminate frustrations and to resolve conflicts within oneself and with. others will make students all the more willing to accept the training and then to make use of the techniques.
3. No less interesting and attractive for young people is the learning of methods that enable them to use their psychological capabilities in a creative way -- and to discover and give value to their own latent gifts. Many of these techniques can be taught and practiced. as psychological exercises in the schools. Among the most important are those concerning the various stages and types of meditation: concentration, visualization, reflective meditation, etc.

4. Unification and Synthesis

There is now an often sharp conflict between these tendencies and those of individualism separativeness, aggressiveness. The situation is complicated, by

the fact that certain characteristics especially -- the Positive Attitude, favour individualistic self-assertion. This helps to explain some contrasts existing in the present period of transition and confusion. Two opposite tendencies alternate and conflict with one another in many individuals: self-assertion as opposed to conformism by which one gains appreciation and success in the world. Even the so-called. "anti-social" types form groups (gangs of youth, criminal associations); groups of various types are formed within every nation, and nations themselves unite in blocks; but these groups are often separative and in conflict among themselves. All this contributes to the present state of agitation, to the lack of security and to the conflicts to be found in every area. In spite of this the ideal of synthesis, world unification and the aspiration toward this ideal have been so strong as to inspire numerous activities which have as their goal the attainment of peace, mutual understanding and world cooperation.

1. Eliminate, or at least lessen the separability, the combatitive and aggressive impulses and all that rouses and intensifies them;
2. Actively favour the tendency toward synthesis: among young people, in families, schools and in communities;
3. To call attention to and counter-balance excessive and erroneous manifestations of this tendency.

IV. Psychosynthesis in Education

The above-named characteristics, particularly the trend toward unification and synthesis, favour psychosynthesis in education. It has two aspects and fields of action:

1. Synthesis in the individual (intrapersonal psychosynthesis)
2. Synthesis between individuals (interpersonal psychosynthesis); and synthesis between the individual and various groups (group or social psychosynthesis).

A. Individual psychosynthesis combines two main principles and objectives:

1. The integration of the individual, that is:
 - a. the development, in well-balanced proportions, of all his/her psychological functions (sensation, feeling, thought, imagination, intuition, will, etc.). This requires an activation and training of what is under-developed, and the control of that which is over-developed. It should be noted that control does not mean repression, but rather, wise regulation and use.
 - b. The organization of these functions into a coordinated and harmonious activity. Care and special attention will be given, to the re-awakening of the existing qualities and energies of the

superconscious level, and to their proper assimilation and use by the **Self**. This is in agreement with the broad, inclusive concept of what is "spiritual"; it is unnecessary to point out the value of this aspect of the human being. Furthermore, its development and use will be particularly necessary for several reasons: first, to fill in the void caused by the widespread departure from institutional religions and from their doctrines second, to demonstrate the existence of an inspirational. source available to all, and of a common ground upon. which all may meet and finally, to offer the justification and scientific interpretation of religious, aesthetic and illuminative experiences.

c.

2. To discover and to attain consciousness of an inner centre of self identity and the active use of its powers, particularly of the principal one: the WILL in order to affect inner integration and to promote effective outer action. This Centre is first experienced. as a personal, conscious self, but then, this is later on recognized. as a reflection or projection of a Higher Spiritual Self, always present, even if not acknowledged., at the apex of the superconscious level.

B. Inter-personal Psychosynthesis

Individuals are not isolated. beings, they are related to other individuals, groups and to all of humanity through *many* vital links This is true even if these links fail to be recognized or are denied by egocentric and separative attitudes; this gives a great and permanent importance that is strengthened. by the fact that such relationships are developing so rapidly.

One distinctive characteristic of our society is the enormous increase in communications and the subsequent development of collaborations between individuals and groups. This is creating forms of cooperation, but also produces, at the same time, greater occasions for conflict. These developments, in addition to the new types of community being formed., indicate the need for a new science -- the science of relationships -- with its new, specific techniques.

If it were our intention to write a treatise on education, the limited. preceding outline would require extensive development, but we have only wished. to offer it as an introduction, to the sections that will follow, in which some specific applications of education are examined., some of which are. already in use.

V. Education in the Family

The need for education within the family and its decisive importance in conditioning and in influencing the whole life of the child was previously cited..

This is an extremely difficult task and all parents as well as future parents should take this fact clearly into consideration and prepare themselves seriously to face the duties and responsibilities. that such a task entails The most obvious difficulties are those due to the crisis that the family, considered. the basic human group or social unit is now passing through, a crisis that is part of the general, critical situation of humanity as a whole.

In the past the family was closely-knit and ruled by the principle of authority. Its positive qualities were the love existing among its members, and the spirit of sacrifice that inspired. the parents. But this love was often not an enlightened. one; it was possessive and jealous, and relations with others were generally characterized by group selfishness and were therefore separative. Modern, conditions, however, are producing profound changes in the structure and functioning of the family unit and have loosened the ties that bind its members, sometimes to the point of dissolving them.

The causes, both external and psychological, are varied. Dynamism and extraversion are creating a strong centrifugal force which is pushing family members out of the house. The father is often absorbed. in his work and in other outside activities, often to the point of exhaustion; the interests and jobs outside the family are on the increase for the mother while the children are involved in school and in extracurricular activities and in their own personal, group relationships. It has been said that the home is becoming little more than a garage! Even the man woman relationship has been undergoing a crisis stemming from the emancipation. of women from their traditional, submissive role and from their total absorption in their feminine duties. All this has its positive side, but it can also create exaggerations that give rise to difficult problems of adjustment.

No less serious is the crisis between the older and the younger generations. Tensions and conflicts between the elderly and young people have not been lacking in the past. Turgenev, for example, makes this situation the theme of his novel Fathers and Sons, but the current trend. tends to bring them. to the point of an acute and sometimes dramatic hostility. Apart from all that, in the education imparted (or that should be imparted) in the family, there is another fundamental difficulty, independent of time and place. Children are deeply influenced by the psychological life of their parents, and especially by their attitudes, complexes, and unconscious conflicts. Many psychologists and psychoanalysts have indicated the harmful and even disastrous consequences that children suffer. A particularly convincing description of this has been made by Frances G. Wickes in the chapter "Influence of Parents' Difficulties on the Child's Unconscious" from her excellent book The Inner World of Childhood. Naturally, one cannot ask parents to be fault-free nor can parents ask it of themselves. But a sincere

acknowledging of these faults, along with the awareness of the dangers that they bring to their children should spur parents on to recognize their own responsibility, and to do all that is within their power to reduce them to a minimum, if not to eliminate the consequences entirely. There is much that they can do. Deeper knowledge of man's nature, brought in. by dynamic psychology is now available to the public, and this should encourage farsighted. parents to acquire basic concepts concerning the laws governing the life of the psyche, child psychology, and methods for constructively influencing human behaviour. There are many good, non technical books on such subjects, and one can seek advice from an expert when necessary. But much more should be done, and. on a more long-term scale. Education for parenthood should hold an important place in all schools serving adolescents. There are already some beginnings in this direction, and one may expect that their full. development will be seen in the future. At the same time, its very importance demands that it be given priority- among the urgent, educational tasks in the present period of transition. Only a few of the main points may be cited here:

1. Pre-natal Education

It has been shown that the psychological condition of the mother during pregnancy strongly influences the future child. For example, it has been observed that undesired children often manifest suicidal tendencies later on in life. Therefore, the mother's psychological attitude and the atmosphere of the family surrounding her, should be as positive and as constructive as possible.

2. Understand the True Nature of the Baby

The belief that a baby is a simple, "transparent" being tends to make one feel that it is easy to understand. him/her. In reality, this is not so, as shown by the diverse and contrasting concepts put forth regarding the nature of the baby. One of these which originated primarily with Rousseau, considers the baby as intrinsically "good", a natural, healthy being who would develop normally and harmoniously if he/she were not subjected. to the warping influences of "civilization". Other educators, such as Maria Montessori, have also stressed in a less exaggerated way, the positive qualities and the great potentialities existing in every child.

A completely opposite position is taken by Freud and other psychoanalysts who, in. describing the powerful instinctive impulses, conflicts and complexes existing in the child, have gone as far as to define him as "a creature who is perverse in many different ways".

There are many books and magazines that deal with child psychology from different points of view. Their value varies a great deal, and it is not easy to find

one's way in this field. These books are often concerned with the most obvious characteristics and forms of behaviour, ignoring the depths and the heights of human nature in spite of the fact that these are. also present in children and in adolescents. For example, in one of these books that is good in certain aspects, the authors (three eminent scholars) do not even mention the unconscious, the imagination, creativity, the will and spiritual experiences. But we can recommend. two books that can both be of great help in gaining a. new understanding of youth. The first is the Inner world of Childhood by Frances Wickes, and the second is The Recreation of the Individual by Dr. Hinkle (Harcourt, Brace New York, 1923) in which a chapter entitled "The Child" is particularly instructive.

3. Individual Psychological Differences

These are very important and should be given full attention. and consideration. There are three types:

1. Psycho-sexual differences. These are greater than are generally acknowledged and can be noted already from early childhood.
2. Different Psychological Types. (Both of these subjects are dealt with very well in Dr. Hinkle's book.)
3. The Psycho-spiritual Constitution, the vocations, the specific and unique attitudes of each individual.

4. The Influence of the Characteristics of the Future

The reaction of children and youth to these increasing influences make them very different from the way today's adults were as children. This new, important fact should be taken into account constantly.

Many of the "active methods" now used in the best progressive schools must be suitably applied by parents, both before their children reach school age, and then, later on, in combination and in harmony with the scholastic educational methods.

The specific and essential elements of family education are:

a) Love

It can seem obvious and natural to love ones own children, but in reality, to love in the right way is something that is extremely difficult. We must free ourselves from the widespread illusion that it is enough to "love", and must sincerely face up to the fact that there are many kinds of "love", some of which may be harmful and even destructive. possessive love, jealous love, anxious love have

had, and still have, disastrous effects. The main duty of parents, therefore, is to acknowledge the necessity of learning the difficult art of loving wisely.

b) Indirect Education

There is a paradox in family education that parents should be aware of and always keep in mind. The most effective education does not consist in the direct and deliberate action on the child, but is accomplished by the constant influence of the "psychological atmosphere" that pervades the house and through the powerful suggestion of the "living example" of the parents. This has often been emphasized and does not require explanation. But it is necessary to point out that the acceptance of this principle and its coherent application would create a real revolution in family education, shifting the emphasis from the children's behaviour to that of the parents. This is the logical consequence of the fact that the inner attitude and the behaviour of the parents create the "psychological atmosphere" and make them "examples" or "models" that inevitably condition the children.

This indirect education asks parents to:

- Avoid all expressions of irritation, depression, fear and other negative thoughts and emotions in the presence of children. Above all, every bitter discussion caused by conflicts between the parents' points of views should be eliminated.
- Abstain from "projecting" onto children one's own negative states of mind and aggressive impulses.

These requests require much from parents, but a sincere and never-ending attempt to satisfy them is an expression of real love -- a love that provides the necessary motive and strength. One further incentive is the recognition of the great benefit that this self-discipline gives to those who subject themselves to it. The paradoxical, but very real consequence to all of this, is that from this point of view, children oblige their parents to educate themselves!

One may add that where the atmosphere of the home is one of wise love, the family relationships will be regulated by understanding, patience, cheerfulness, and ordered activity. One of the things that parents must realize is that the so-called "naughtiness" of children is often the product of the unfavourable and unnatural conditions existing particularly in the large cities. They deprive the child of direct contact with nature and an adequate freedom of movement and muscular activity that are essential for his/her normal life and development. As this need becomes more and more recognized, new concepts of city planning and changes in our way of life will be chosen with the aim of satisfying this need.. The parents who seek to penetrate into the inner life of their child have an

even more difficult problem of understanding. In this case, one may always rely upon the help made available by the progress in the field of psychology, and by those advances expected in the future.

Frequent and varied are those occasions which require the exercise of patience. Aside from the most obvious, the spontaneous expressions of children should be listened to with special attention, without the interruption of criticism. Their questions also merit adequate and precise answers; they constitute precious opportunities to give appropriate instructions to the specific and immediate need of the questioner.

Cheerfulness needs little comment, other than the observation that it does not mean excitement or uncontrolled gaiety. It is a combination of harmony and good humour, qualities that this present period lacks; but one may expect them to be increasingly in evidence if there is truth to the assertion that "joy will be the fundamental note of the future".

The value of ordered activity is obvious if we realize that in order to be trained for action and self-expression, children need, and even ask to be active. The acquisition of skill in action, and the sense of doing something useful, have great educational value and are essential to the whole development process. One should therefore ask children to carry out appropriate tasks. These include helping mother with domestic chores, thus permitting the child to feel "important" and training him/her for harmonious cooperation.

Even these activities offer the wise parent countless opportunities to teach many subjects. Such cooperation, on the part of the child, should receive proper appreciation and even a tangible reward.

VI. Differential Education

A misunderstanding with regard to the meaning of democracy exists which is creating unfavourable conditions in the field of education, and which must therefore be pointed out and eliminated. It has its origins in an erroneous concept of "equality" that forms the basis of the democratic ideal. The true equality that democracy should foster is that of offering equal opportunities to all, independent of differences in social and financial position, sex, race and religion, and not the obviously erroneous ideas about the identicalness of all human beings. This equality of opportunity constitutes the essence of social justice and fully complies with the recognition of the varied and profound differences among human beings. The reality of these differences is evident and undeniable for any impartial observer, and an important branch of psychology (differential psychology) is dedicated to their scientific investigation.

There are two main kinds of differences:

1. Differences of type and of psychological attitudes;
2. Differences of psychological and spiritual levels, and of "gifts".

These differences tend to be on the increase now, but mental development and the positive attitude are revealed, at first, only in an advanced. minority. Education should fully take into account both of these kinds of differences, because they offer a foundation for democratic guidance and indicate the need for suitable educational materials and methods geared for individual differences.

We will consider only the second type of differences here, due to the greater difficulties which they present. First, it is not easy to assess the true level of development of a child or adolescent; and second, it is not easy to offer the appropriate educational aids to the gifted, or to the highly-gifted in the forming of special schools or classes, because these often stir opposition among parents, school authorities and political groups who deem them "anti-democratic". On the contrary, one should clearly recognize that it is in the general interest of every community or nation to discover and to offer the help possible to those who (because of their superior qualities) will become the future leaders of humanity: its scientists, political figures, economists, artists, educators, creators. of the new culture' and civilization.

VII. Education in the School

The great changes produced by the trends and characteristics being manifested with growing impetus in all areas of human life are the causes of the acute crisis in the present school systems that are the object of extensive discussions and strong criticism. The breadth and complexity of the problems concerning them stretch from the basic principles and goals of education to the many technical questions, organizational programs, buildings and financial means.

We will limit ourselves to the examination of some of the basic problems: One of the main. ones. is how to resolve the conflict between mental development and the positive attitude (favouring individual self-observation and anti-social behaviour) on one hand, and, the trend towards unification which, with its exaggerations and faulty applications, is creating excessive standardization, and in some cases, even forced regimentation, on the other. The goal of a wise school system should therefore be the harmonization. of these contrasting tendencies and the constructive use of their higher aspects.

The growing mental development and positive attitude demand the adoption of the best methods of the "new education" in order to encourage and give direction. To the independent activity and initiative of the student. At the same time, the opposite trend toward unification can be used to further independent

initiatives and activities and cooperating in joint projects. But much more can be done, as the success of experiments carried out in a number of schools with regard to civic education has demonstrated. This has been accomplished through self-government the school is modelled as a small town community, in miniature, with a mayor, a community council, a judge and various committees functioning under the discreet and tactful guidance of the instructors. One such school, the "SCHOOL CITY PESTALOZZI" in Florence, whose students are drawn from poor sections, has applied this self-government with success for a number of years. The great value of this method as preparation for the social life of the adult is evident with the countless opportunities it creates for practical application of the required program of study being taught in the regular classes. The choices, decisions and responsibility inherent in the self-government exercise develop some of the essential qualities of the will and constitute the best type of education towards freedom and democracy.

Another important aspect of education is the creation of a cheerful atmosphere in the classes and the use of humour as much as is possible -- and it often is. What is taught must reach the unconscious and be clearly recorded there in order for it to make a strong impression and be easily recalled. All boring or uninteresting things are rejected by the unconscious which refuses to record them, while all that is entertaining and that stimulates the curiosity is well-accepted and makes a long-lasting impression.

A further innovation in the program of schools having students of adolescent age, or older, is the introduction of psychology which, as the science of the human being, should, and will become, the main science of the future. The internal conflicts, uncertainties and confusions of adolescence, caused by the reawakening of new biological and psychological energies, stir up a lively interest in young people about their own personality and that of others. Therefore, psychology will be very well-accepted if presented, not in a dry, academic manner, but rather in a humanistic way. Active methods are particularly appropriate for the teaching of the various psychological functions. Exercises in observation, visualization, mental concentration and creative expression can be amply practiced in class. They constitute a good preparation for spiritual education.

VIII. Spiritual Education

The first thing that must be understood very well is the real meaning of "spiritual", particularly in its wider and more inclusive meaning. In addition to its intrinsic importance and value that can be underlined, an education based on spiritual values offers a constructive solution for the contrasting viewpoints of the supporters of humanistic education and of those favouring technical instruction. The former is accused of being too rooted in the past and of being

interested in ideas and terminology that arouse little interest (and sometimes, even active resistance) among today's youth due to their irrelevance to the present world situation. The opponents of the latter (i.e., technical instruction) maintain that it is concerned only with the capacity to produce, with the acquisition of practical abilities, and with the pursuit of materialistic goals. There is a great deal of truth to both these criticisms. Therefore, two things must be done: The first is to distinguish well the essential, eternal values (human and spiritual): - - kindness, truth beauty, love, wisdom -- from their historical conditioning, from the traditional ways in which they have been presented and imposed. New presentations can be given to these same truths and values which are appropriate to present and future conditions, and which are attractive to youth because they are readily understood and adapted to their mentality. The second is to understand that technical education is not an end unto itself and should not be given an intrinsic value, but must be seen as a means to ends that transcend them; they are means to humanitarian and spiritual goals. In such a way, humanistic knowledge and technical instruction may be integrated harmoniously to establish a synthetic education of the total human being.

Spiritual education has two main aspects. The first concerns the meaning of life, its evolutionary development and its aims. These are far wider and higher than is ordinarily assumed. A number of scientists have recently affirmed the reality of evolutionary progress and have correctly noted that it cannot stop at the "not-too-lofty" stage currently reached by humanity, but must continue toward new and higher levels.

The meaning and purpose of existence and the wonderful potential achievements of humanity can be presented in school, using words suitable to the different ages of the students. The second aspect of spiritual education makes use of the tendency toward unification and synthesis in order to widen the outlooks of the young people and to shift their interest from their own egocentric personality to cooperation, solidarity and to union with ever more extensive groups, until all of humanity is included.

With such an aim in mind, students should be amply informed of the evils, sufferings and misfortunes that torment much of humanity, not only in the Third World countries, but even in the large cities; they should be brought into direct contact with these conditions whenever possible. With their sympathy and compassion thus aroused, they will recognize the urgency of correcting these social ills, of eliminating the causes of so much distress, and of thus cooperating in: the laying down of the foundations of a new world order in which these misfortunes will either be eliminated, or greatly reduced. There are many ways of doing this: for example, they can be informed of the activities: of the different organizations of the United Nations, and in particular, those of the FAO (Food

Administration Organization) that has made humanity aware. of the existence of hundreds of millions of half starved persons in the world. Other ways are: visits to hospitals, slums and to underdeveloped areas in every country.

IX. Methods of Spiritual Education

Spontaneous spiritual experiences occur in children far more frequently than adults would generally realize. Their consciousness is open. to all impressions and those "from above" do not meet with obstacles that they often find in the minds of adults. But these experiences are generally fleeting and become easily submerged in the child's consciousness. by the continuous current of other countless impressions.

Therefore, one of the principal duties of parents is to pay attention to these spontaneous experiences, to appreciate their value, and to encourage their manifestation. When adults do not take them into consideration, when they criticize or ridicule them. (as they often do, in ignorance) the natural reaction of the child is to repress those experiences and to thus "close the door" to higher realities.

Adolescence offers to the adult a new opportunity to be. of help The adolescent becomes aware of new physical and emotional impulses and undergoes., at the same time, an idealistic, and sometimes, even a "mystical" re-awakening that he feels in contrast with the other impulses. This gives him/her a sense of bewilderment and creates conflicts that are difficult to face. Even here, indifference or a critical attitude on the part of parents. or educators cause the adolescent to withdraw into him or herself, while an attitude of understanding and encouragement can create. that "communication" and intimacy that will enable him/her to successfully pass through this period of often tense relations, and will encourage. a future development and spiritual blooming.

Other opportunities come to the fore each time children ask "meta-physical" questions concerning the origin of the world, Heaven, God, death, etc. If parents are ready to prepare themselves adequately, they will find it relatively easy to use these opportunities to their advantage by giving appropriate answers, and by encouraging the spirit of inquiry about these subjects which will become ever stronger with the spreading of mental development. In addition, various active methods can be used., for example:

1. Cultivate the sense of beauty in young people, mainly the esthetic appreciation of the various aspects of nature: the sky, the sea, mountains, flowers, etc.
2. Cultivate the sense of wonder and admiration.

3. Present young people with human examples. of a spiritual life in its various aspects: the great religious figures, geniuses, heroes -- not only as warriors and conquerors -- but as philosophers, poets., artists, scientists, benefactors and as workers in the humanitarian field.
4. Place the emphasis in all specific, religious institutions, on the inner, vital, spiritual aspects and meaning of the doctrines, forms and symbols.
5. Wisely adapt all other methods, such as concentration and meditation for use by young people in order to promote a spiritual life. For adolescents, the teaching of spiritual psychology that favours an understanding of their inner make-up, puts emphasis on their essential spiritual nature and. on their higher possibilities.

X. Meditation in Education

A serious deficiency in modern education is the lack of use of meditation; we therefore seek to indicate applications of Meditation in various phases and conditions of the educational process.

Concentration

Children, when observed superficially, seem to lack the capacity of concentration. But a more careful study of their spontaneous behaviour reveals that when they observe something, or carry out some task that has roused their interest, they demonstrate a concentration that sometimes lasts. a long time. The persistence with which a child observes, for example, the behaviour of ants or the movements of clouds, is well-known. In modern-type schools, one may note how children use the teaching materials placed at their disposal with intense concentration, often repeating the required action many times.

Thus, it is clear that children possess an innate power of concentration which can be further developed and used constructively. Given the fact that their minds are more open and free of worries and personal problems, they often succeed better than the adults.

Observation

Exercises of careful observation must be adopted in education, both as preliminary training to meditation and for their general usefulness in. studying and in all activities. A simple exercise consists of showing a group of objects for a short time and then asking the students to give an accurate description. of them, of their dimensions, forms and colours. Kipling offers an amusing example in his delightful novel, Kim (which contains other psychological points of interest as well, including an experience of spiritual realization). In another similar exercise, a picture is shown to the students for a minute and they are then

asked to describe it. The picture is re-shown again for half a minute. so that they may see what they failed to observe the first time and note their possible errors. This type of exercise should be done in school where. the children can write their descriptions to save time, thus gaining practice, at the same time, in written expression.

Another exercise, a more difficult one, is self-observation, but adolescents have the capacity to carry it out and are readily interested in it. It consists of assuming the position of the observer of one's own inner world, making note of and describing (as they occur) impulses, feelings, images and thoughts that spontaneously emerge from the unconscious into the illuminated field of consciousness.

Visualization

Another group of exercises are those of visualization. The first and most simple is that of imagining (with eyes closed) to "see" a number as if it were written on a blackboard. Beginning with a single number, the student develops his/her ability -- through practice -- until he/she becomes able to "see" numbers of many digits. Other subjects suitable for further visualization exercises are: coloured geometric forms (squares, triangles, circles), then three- dimensional forms (cubes, pyramids, spheres), eventually more and more complex human figures and landscapes. These exercises are also useful in offering to students: proof of the results of the training. A further step, in the case of adolescents, is that of visualizing their ideal model -- the model of what they wish to become.

Reflective Meditation

The observation and visualization exercises prepare the way for the practice of various types. of meditation. The first is reflective meditation, and this, without being acknowledged as such, is used in all school occasions that require reflective thinking, such as the solution of a mathematical problem, or the draft of a composition. But deliberate systematic meditation is something more that yields greater results.

The teacher chooses as the theme. of meditation, at first, some simple, tangible object, for example -- a stone, a flower, a pencil. The pupil is asked to look at it with attention, and, then to reflect on its origins, its nature, and on its qualities, the uses it can serve -- and to say whatever else comes to mind about it.

Even here, for the reasons stated above, written answers are preferable. One can suggest writing, both as ideas present themselves during the meditation, and immediately afterward?, recording the results and conclusions. Every subject can be used for reflective meditation. Adolescents, for example, can use with

benefit the rules concerning: Right Relations, Good Will, and Group Activity which are especially suitable, thanks to their simplicity and practicalness. Young people are able to understand their meaning and aims, and can try to apply them in daily life. They are closely related to the emerging characteristics of Unification and Synthesis. The practice of reflective meditation is truly a training in the art of thinking - - a way of thinking independently and with originality, and should be encouraged. in the family and in the school.

Reflective thinking can be stimulated and directed with a series of questions of the type usually used. in psychology. It would be necessary to: stimulate questions from the student's side, thus encouraging their mental activity, and often revealing their doubts and problems. Prayer has been indicated as the "way of the heart". But this is generally considered as being pertinent to religion., and we will speak of it here only to note that it is associated with the Law of Spiritual Approach and that it can be used in education, in group, both in the family- as well as in school. In countries where religious prayer is not permitted! in the schools because of a clear division between education and religion:, it has been suggested that it be replaced by meditation.

Receptive Meditation

Education has many phases in which receptive meditation can be widely applied and used. The first stage of receptive meditation is silence. This, in addition to its inherent, general value, also has a specific one -- that of antidote to the excessive noise and lack of inner silence produced by the emerging tendencies of extraversion, dynamism and mental activity. The situation has reached the point where today's young people not only do not value silence, but seem to fear it, and are sometimes even incapable of bearing it. To the already general uproar of modern life, they (as well as many adults!) add their personal contribution with their radio blasting at full volume.

Nevertheless, one can teach them to appreciate silence. This is shown. by the results obtained in Montessori schools where "the exercise of silence" is regularly practiced. Here is a meaningful testimony to this fact by Mrs. E. Herman, from her book Creative Prayer (pp. 57-58):

"... a state of balance (equilibrium) and of harmony should be obtained by means of a natural, progressive discipline that begins from early childhood. We must still accept and apply the axioms that to cultivate. the habit of silence is an integral part of all true education; and that children, far from considering a request for silence as an unnatural and intolerable imposition, have an innate bent for quiet. In order to recognize this, it is enough to take part in a period of silence in a Montessori school; the curtains are drawn, the signal is given and every little face is lowered while a serene calm descends on the children. It is

truly silence and not drowsiness. No attempt is made to suggest a meditation theme, and yet something very similar to meditation. takes place, because, when the voice of the teacher calls the children by name, one by one, into the adjoining room, they come as beings who have learned a wonderful blissful secret. There is something deep in their joyous eyes, something more than just health and physical peace in all their behaviour. A strange beauty, a freshness similar to the morning dew, seems to have enriched the natural, child -- like vitality and charm, already so delightful in and of themselves. (See also: M. Montessori: The Secret of Childhood, Garzanti, editor). Whatever one may think about the Montessori. system, few would doubt the wisdom of that moment of calm in the midst of the morning activity."

Receptive meditation can be practiced, both in family as well as at school, as a form of Group Activity. When the family finds itself in front of a problem, a difference of opinion or a conflict, a request for light and inspiration made together during a receptive group meditation often proves to be very effective. This method eliminates the personal element from the difficulty, raising it to higher levels of inner reality, from where, through. the super- conscious level, the desired intuition may arrive. Receptive meditation could be used in classes with adolescent students, after suitable preparation. It can help in the re-awakening of intuition, inspiration and spiritual realization.

The highest theme. of meditation is the Self and the teaching of spiritual psychology is the preparation for it. Parents and teachers will find practical value in. the Self- Identification exercise towards achieving this goal.

Creative Meditation

There is, at last, creative meditation. This "inner action" produces great results and is, in addition, necessary to counter-balance the current exaggerated tendencies toward extraversion and outer activity. Adolescents can be instructed in its use, in an elementary form, while its more advanced techniques can be practiced at the university level.

Furthermore, the application to everyday life of these indications concerning meditation in education can lead to:

1. Establishing of Right Relations in the family context, particularly between parents and children, and among the children themselves. These relationships are especially tense at the present time, for reasons already stated. A serious scholastic problem is the establishment of right harmonious and constructive relationships between teachers and pupils. The relationships among the students themselves, though generally smoother, offer frequent occasions for individual and group conflicts, and

the training towards cooperation, by means of group work, is therefore particularly useful. The secondary school programs should include instruction in the practice of right relations outside the school and in all areas of social life.

2. Good Will is an essential element in fostering right motivation, and is particularly necessary for counter-balancing the separative and egoistic use of the will. We must give it the greatest importance in education; first, in its aspect of a courteous and kind disposition towards others, and second, even more in the active and dynamic quality of the will itself.

Group Activity is at the root of cooperation, in the family, as in school. Social service offers, for example, a wider field of action, and the opportunities for such service must be offered during the school years.

The Balancing and Synthesis of the Opposites

by Roberto Assagioli, MD

Contents

- Physical Polarity
- Emotional Polarity
- Mental Polarity
- Spiritual Polarity
- Inter-individual Polarity
- Balancing Opposite Poles
- Notes

Polarity is a universal fact; it is inherent in cosmic manifestation. It is true that the Ultimate and Supreme Reality is the One, the Absolute, the Transcendent; but it can only be defined by what it is not.

From the very moment that cosmic manifestation begins to unfold, duality is born. The first fundamental duality is precisely that between manifestation and the Unmanifest. In the *Bhagavad Gita* this is expressed in the words: "Having pervaded the whole Universe with a fragment of myself, I remain." In the process of manifestation the fundamental polarity is that of Spirit and Matter.

It is at once necessary to state that all polarity is a *relationship* between two elements, and that, as such, it is never absolute, but relative even to a particular pair of opposites: the same element can be positive in its relation to a certain "pole" and negative in its relation to another. An instance of the relativity of the "polar relationships" exists in the fundamental polarity' between Spirit and Matter. According to some, Spirit is the free and transcendent Reality which stands above the various pairs of opposites existing in manifested life. Such is the conception of Keyserling, contained in his book, *From Suffering to Fulfillment* (London; Selwyn and Blount) (cf. also *Das Buch von Personlichen Leben* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlag Anstalt, 1936), by the same writer, p. 505-510-515.) According to others, Spirit corresponds to the positive pole, to the dynamic and creative element in all duality. Such is Jung's idea. In other words, Keyserling regards the "tension" between Spirit and the various manifestations of life as existing in a vertical" direction, which he refers to as the "dimension of intensity," while Jung conceives polarity more as a horizontal relationship.

Physical Polarity

In the physical world, the most commonly recognized polarity is that between the positive and negative poles in electricity. This polarity is the basis of the constitution of matter since, as is well known, each atom contains charges of electricity differentiated into a positive nucleus and a varying number of negative electrons. Electric polarity manifests itself in various ways which have many practical applications, as in induced and alternating currents, etc. Interesting analogies can be found in various polarities in the field of psychology, such as emotional attraction and repulsion, ambivalence and the "compensatory" function.

Within living organisms, such as the human body, there are various polarities. One of the most important is that between the sympathetic and the parasympathetic nervous Systems; the former stimulates catabolism, the latter assimilation or anabolism. Other polarities exist between the different endocrine glands.

One of the most important and general polarities in the three kingdoms of organic life (vegetable, animal and human) is the sexual. The positive pole is represented by the masculine element, the negative by the feminine element. This does not mean that the former is active and the latter passive. Both are active, but in a different way, the masculine element being the dynamic, initiating pole, while the feminine element is the receptive, "gestative," elaborative pole. This type of polarity extends far beyond the man-woman relationship to innumerable manifestations in life. It has been particularly and deeply emphasized by the Chinese who regard these two principles as the foundation both of cosmic evolution and of every aspect of human life. The creative aspect, symbolized by the father and Heaven, they call Yang, while Yin is the receptive and elaborative aspect, symbolized by the mother and the Earth. The well-being of Man depends, in the view of Chinese philosophy, on the harmonious accord between Man and the cyclic evolution of the Universe, woven from the innumerable relationships and interactions of Yang and Yin. (1)

Emotional Polarity

In the field of the emotions and feelings we find those dualities which are familiar to all: pleasure-pain; excitement-depression; confidence-fear; attraction-repulsion; love-hate. Such is their extent that one might say that the life of the average human being is based on his emotional reactions to things, to events and to persons. These reactions have a definite function and purpose, provided they are maintained within appropriate bounds. But if we allow them to take over-as too often is the case-we are apt to become their slaves. Later we shall consider how the limitations of these opposites can be overcome.

Mental Polarity

In the mental realm there is the polarity between the analytical activity of the concrete mind and the synthetic operation of the abstract intelligence; between the inductive process (from the particular to the general) and the deductive process (from the general to the particular).

Consideration of the human personality in its totality discloses various fundamental polarities which have been extensively investigated by modern psychology. The knowledge about the human being acquired in this process has stimulated the development of important psychological, educational and psychotherapeutic techniques. The principal polarities here are: Body-Psyche; Consciousness-the Unconscious; the lower Unconscious-the Superconscious; Pathos (Receptivity, Sensitivity, Reactivity)-Ethos (Activity, Dynamism, Will); Eros (Feeling)-Logos (Reason).

Spiritual Polarity

The fundamental duality in the spiritual realm is that existing between the personality and the Transpersonal Self, a polarity which is the cause of many inner conflicts, until harmonious relationships and an increasing blending or unification (spiritual psychosynthesis) are achieved.

Interindividual Polarity

There are also many "inter-individual" polarities which are of the utmost importance. The most and fundamental one is that existing, on all levels, between Man and Woman. Then there is that between adults and young people, particularly in the interaction between parents and their children. There are, further, the various relationships between individuals and the different groups to which they belong.

Among them we find the family considered as a unit, as a "psychic entity," which is made up not only of members who are alive, but also of ancestral influences and family traditions. Such influences are sometimes a help to the individual, offering him an ideal and a way of life which he may be encouraged to live by. Other times, and perhaps more often, they may hem him in and even oppress him.

Then come the social groups of different kinds (social and professional classes, cultural and religious groups, nations) with which the individual may find himself associated, in a condition of passive subordination or of cooperation, as leader and directing agent or in conflict. Similar relationships exist among groups; both among those of the same kind and size, i.e., between families and

families, classes and classes, nations and nations, etc.; and the "hierarchical" ones, between the family and the state; classes and nations; between a state and a federation of states.

Two kinds of polarities which are of great importance are that between the northern and southern individuals and groups in each nation and continent and that between Western and Eastern peoples.

Balancing Opposite Poles

Each of these numerous polarities confronts us with the problem of their interplay and balancing. The following is a brief survey of the general principles and methods of balancing opposite poles with the object of resolving "polar tensions:"

1. *Fusion of the two poles*, involving the neutralization of their charges of energy.
2. *Creation of a new being, of a new reality*.
3. *Adjustment of the opposite poles*, by means of an "intermediary centre" or of a principle higher than both. A regulating action of this kind can be brought about in two ways:
 - a. By diminishing the amplitude of the oscillations between the two extremes, at times even to vanishing point, thus inducing a more or less complete neutralization ("the happy medium"). An instance of this, of great actual interest, is the oscillation between excessive authority and uncontrolled freedom in education and the search for a balanced attitude.
 - b. By consciously and wisely directing the alternations so that the result is harmonious and constructive, and in accord with the cyclic alternations of both individual and general, human and cosmic, conditions. (This is the method taught by Chinese philosophy and particularly by the *I Ching*.)
4. *Synthesis*, brought about by a higher element or principle which transforms, sublimates and reabsorbs the two poles into a higher reality.

The different types of polarity require correspondingly appropriate solutions. Man often has the freedom -- and consequently the responsibility -- of choosing between different methods of balancing. It should, however, be pointed out that the indicated solutions are not always as clear cut as the above enumeration might lead one to believe. Sometimes, as the following examples will show, they can overlap or be combined in various ways.

In the field of electricity, the most simple outcome is neutralization through the fusion of the positive and negative charges. However, the conditions in which

this fusion is effected determine the results, which are thus subject to considerable variation. When, for instance, the poles are brought towards each other, and the voltage with which they are charged overcomes the resistance of the medium which separates them, a discharge is produced which manifests as a spark. Lightning is an instance of this phenomenon. When, on the other hand, the poles are kept apart but connected by a conducting wire, with some "resistance" introduced at a point along the conducting wire, the electrical energy becomes susceptible to various transformations. This latter process is being utilized with increasing ingenuity in the transformation of electricity into light, into heat, or into movement. In these cases the process of neutralization produces various useful effects. In the biological realm, health can be defined as a dynamic equilibrium ever threatened and ever restored between a series of polarities, such as exist between the divisions of the nervous system, between various endocrine glands, and in general between the anabolic and catabolic functions. *In the same way, psychological life can be regarded as a continual polarization and tension between differing tendencies and functions, and as a continual effort, conscious or not, to establish equilibrium.* Among the most important psychological polarities are: impulse-inhibition; feeling-reason; extroversion-introversion.

In sexual polarity, the union of the two physical elements has a creative effect. The dynamism of their fusion brings about the birth of a new organism similar to that of the parents. In humanity this wonderful physical creative function is closely associated with the psychological polarities, and this often produces very complex situations and difficult problems.

In the fields of drives, emotions and feelings, the balancing of opposite qualities requires the intervention of a higher regulating principle of a mental or transpersonal nature. The first task is to prevent the drives and the emotions from overwhelming and submerging the reason and the will. The best way to achieve this is to learn how to disidentify oneself from them at will, in order to be free at any time to maintain the "I", the centre of consciousness, on a higher level above them, in order to be able to observe and evaluate them, and to wisely regulate them as needed.

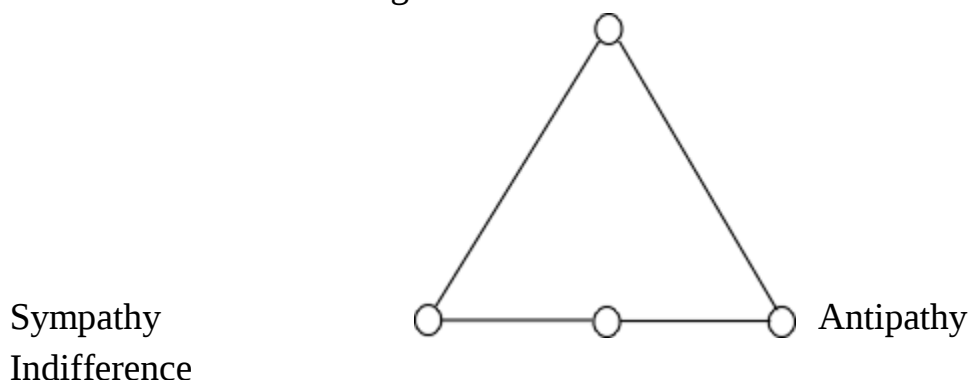
Let us make it clear that to regulate does not mean to "suppress," and that this does not in any way lead to aridity or a lack of sensitivity. Let us, for example, consider a fundamental polarity, pleasure-pain. As long as we remain slaves of this duality, always actively seeking pleasure and fearfully fleeing from pain, we shall not find lasting peace or permanent satisfaction. On the other hand, a forced inhibition, an artificial impassivity, certainly does not constitute a satisfactory solution. This can only be arrived at by means of that clear insight which enables us to understand the causes, the nature and the functions of both

pleasure and pain. This insight carries the recognition that, in accepting pleasure without craving for it and attachment to it, and in accepting pain, when unavoidable, without fearing it and rebelling against it, one can learn much from both pleasure and pain, and "distill the essence" which they contain. Moreover, one can gradually raise the quality and level of these "opposites"; one passes by degrees from the physical pleasures in and of themselves to the joys of feeling and of the mind, finally experiencing spiritual joy. One makes one's way from physical suffering to emotional troubles, to intellectual turmoil, then to compassion for the sufferings of others and then of the whole human race. From all these experiences one gathers the fruits of wisdom, and learns to keep the centre of consciousness stabilized more and more at a level above the alternations of personal pleasure and pain. Finally we can acquire the ability to identify ourselves with the Universal Life, with the Supra-Individual Self, with the Supreme, which transcends all "opposites" in ineffable bliss.

If we examine more closely the specific polarities of the emotional field, we can clearly distinguish two main types of solutions. One is realized on the same level; it can be called "the middle way" of compromise, the blending of the two poles. The other solution is achieved at a higher level: it is the fusion of the poles into a higher *synthesis*.

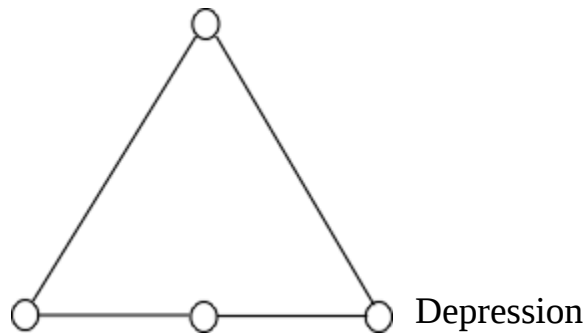
The method of synthesis which is analogous in a certain sense to a chemical combination, includes and absorbs the two elements into a higher unity endowed with qualities differing from those of either of them. The difference between the solutions achieved through compromise and those brought about through synthesis can be clearly indicated by a triangular diagram. Here are a few examples:

Benevolent Understanding



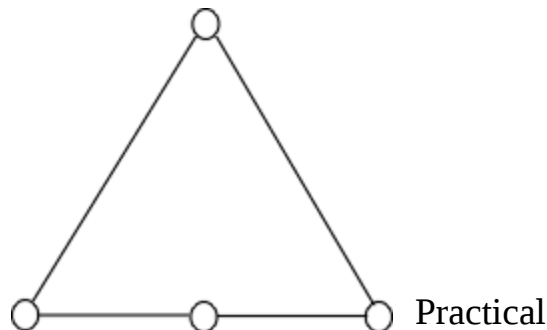
Serenity

Excitement
Apathetic Calm



Clear Vision of Reality

Blind
Fearful



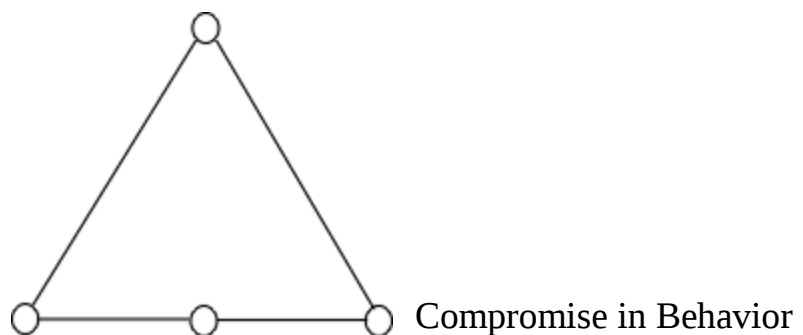
Spiritual
of the Cause of the Painful Situation

Acceptance

and

Elimination

Rebellion
Submission



The polarity between "mind" and "heart", between reason and feeling (*Logos* and *Eros*), is regulated in the first place by the recognition of their respective functions and of the legitimate field of action of each of the two functions, so that neither dominates the other. This can be followed by a mutual and increasing cooperation and interpenetration between the two, finally arriving at

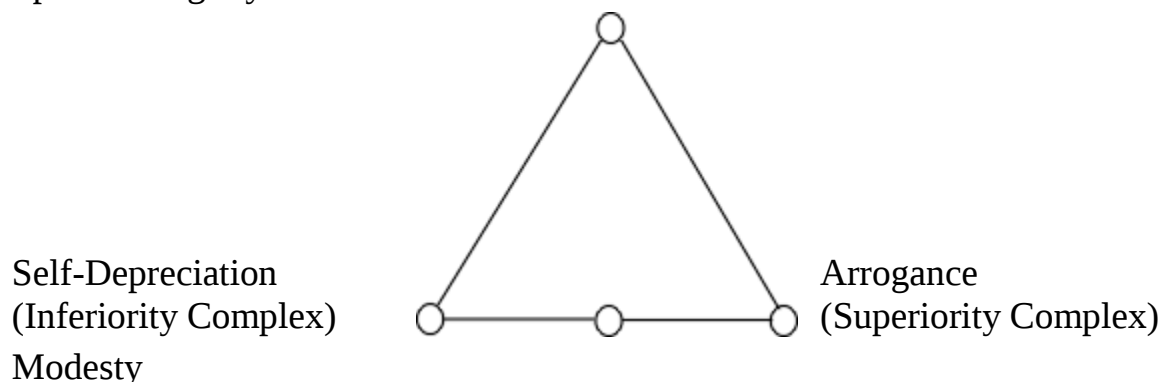
the synthesis so well expressed by Dante in the words "Intellectual light full of love."

The polarity between sensitivity and receptivity (*Pathos*) and dynamism or Will (*Ethos*) which, in a wider sense, corresponds to psychosexual polarity -- for the former pole is the "feminine" and the latter the "masculine" modality -- can also at first be controlled by a balanced adjustment, to be superseded by a creative synthesis.

The fundamental polarity between the human personality as a whole and the spiritual Self can also be resolved into a unity. This is the aim of the process of harmonization and transmutation involving a protracted series of conflicts, approaches, and contacts, each producing partial, increasingly expanded fusions. In short, this is the process of spiritual psych~ synthesis. It constitutes the noble effort, the central drama of Man who, either consciously or unconsciously, aspires to this high goal, or is pushed towards it by his inability to find lasting satisfaction or a true peace until he has attained it.

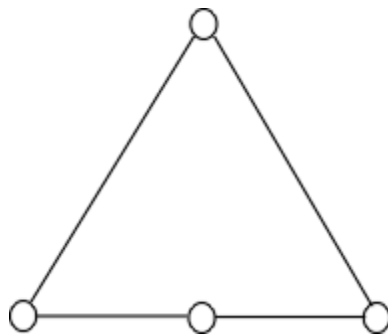
The interaction between the Self and the personality creates a series of "triangular" relationships similar to those previously indicated. Here are some of them:

Spiritual Dignity



Spiritual Understanding

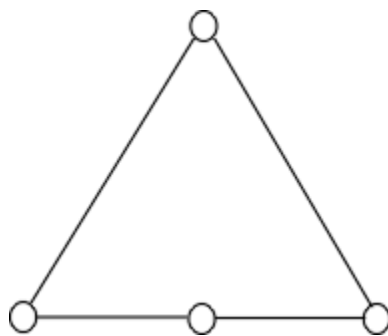
Intellectual Doubt
Dogmatism



Common Sense

Transmutation and Sublimation

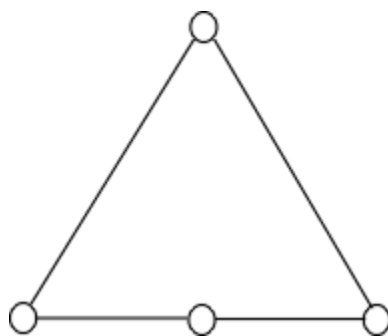
Licence
Repression



Temperance

Spiritual Energy

Weakness
Equilibrated
Human Force



Violence

The various equilibrations, adjustments and syntheses can be produced in different ways. At times, they are preceded by intense crises and conflicts. In other cases they are reached in a more gradual and harmonious way by means of a progressive decrease in the oscillations of the "pendulum". A clear

understanding of this process of synthesis enables one to achieve it more easily and rapidly. The essential requirement, as previously mentioned, is to avoid identifying oneself with either of the two opposite poles, and to control, transmute, and direct their energies from a higher centre of awareness and power.

Notes

1. Numerous Chinese texts deal with this point. One of the most interesting is the *I Ching* or *The Book of Transformations*, which, disguised under the form of a method of divination, contains treasures of wisdom. Jung, in *The Secret of the Golden Flower*, and also Keyserling, expressed great appreciation of it.

The Horizons of Psychosynthesis

by Roberto Assagioli, M.D.

(Meeting of Directors of Italian Centers of Psychosynthesis, December 1973)

Dear friends, we would like to take a tour of the ample psychosynthesis horizon. Given the time available we can only give a brief outline of the various aspects and speak about them briefly, but I will give you the text of my introduction so that you then can carry it out with your contributions, written comments and developments. If it is possible, we can have another meeting later to examine them together.

The meetings, both here in the Institute and in your centres, will consist of lessons and exercises, as in the past years, always focusing on the exercises. As regards the lessons, the themes could be the following: first, a presentation with comments from my new book "Principles and Methods of Therapeutic Psychosynthesis". Second, the theme of the Will, which some of you have already started on. I will let you have the translation of the new chapters, that is of those that are not in the issues that you have of the last few years. This could be the start of what is called in the book the Will Project: there is also a questionnaire for you, an actuation program of the Act of Will. You could choose for yourselves the other themes. In general, I would propose to "limit" yourselves, so to speak, to the fields of psychosynthesis that, as I will indicate later, are various. You could speak also about some of the scholars that have an affinity with psychosynthesis: Maslow, Frankl, and Rogers.

In presenting the book, it is opportune to say that it does not regard only therapy. The techniques and the exercises described can be used also for individual psychosynthesis (self-training) and psychosynthetic education. We find more and more that there are no clear limits, neither substantial differences, between a healthy person and a suffering person. In fact, as you all know, someone has said, with evident exaggeration, that "there are no suffering people, but that society is suffering and makes those who are dominated by it suffer".

Based on the local conditions and possibilities, it could be opportune to do this separately or in two courses: one, for newcomers. An elementary course explaining the basics, principles, attitude of psychosynthesis. And for the others, who have participated for some time, more extensive development courses.

I would like to speak about the fields of action of psychosynthesis:

- First, and above all, training and self-training, beginning with ourselves and continuing for all our life.
- Second, the educative field.
- Third, the therapeutic field, that can be distinguished in the specialized one, that is for those who deal with neuropsychic disturbances, and the generic and psychosomatic one aimed at doctors that recognize the interaction of body and psyche.
- Fourth, the interpersonal field, of human relationships, principally those of the couple, but also between parents and children, teachers and students, employers and employees and – generally – between those who command others and those who are commanded.
- Fifth, the social-individual field between human groups, from the family group to the various groups that one belongs to; professional, national, etc., tending towards human psychosynthesis.

Naturally, in a one year program, and also of several years, it is not possible to carry out fully the activity in all these fields. Each center can choose the field or fields that it thinks necessary according to its preferences and disposition, the environment and local opportunities.

It is important to distinguish in each field between the personal and transpersonal level. In many cases one can or one must be limited to personal psychosynthesis, without entering into the transpersonal field. But when one can speak also of the transpersonal aspect, the better, above all because with their questions people compel us to enter this field. We must always bear in mind that transpersonal experiences are real facts, and as facts can be scientifically studied, that is in an empirical and objective way, with scientific method in the widest meaning of the word. That which is interesting, and also difficult, is the examination of those that can be called "mixed cases", that is of the reactions in the personality of the flux of transpersonal energy on the one hand, and of aspirations and tendencies of the personality towards transpersonal goals, on the other. We could say that, at a higher octave, there is a complex reciprocal interaction, analogue to that between body and psyche.

An activity that some of us and others believe should be developed is that of greater connections, first between the various centres in Italy, and then with the Foundations, Institutes and centres all over the world. One way is that of reciprocally inviting the workers at one centre to speak to those of others. Another development is that of favouring the formation of centres where now they do not exist. The ideal situation would be that there were a centre in every administrative centre of each region and also in many provinces. But, it is not necessary to rush, as it depends on WHO is able to run these centres. Thus, before thinking of a place it is necessary to find or "train" a person who can

promote and sustain the activity of the centre. As normal, the organization comes after and must be at the service of the "living" part of the work.

There are then great possibilities for development: to work in new fields or those that have been up to now little cultivated. First, educative psychosynthesis, that must be first carried out in the family, and then introduced into schools of every level, from junior school to university. Children often and willingly carry out elementary exercises such as those of silence, visualization, etc.

Finally, an efficient way to diffuse psychosynthesis is that of the publication of written material: first of all book reviews; then articles in various magazines and journals, and also translations. Also here, it would be opportune to have good lines of communication so as to not produce duplicates. It would be opportune to continue the free distribution of books and pamphlets to libraries and cultural centres, first "psychosynthesis, for harmony of life" that is of a more general interest, and then the pamphlets aimed at various environments.

This leads to the principle problem: that of the preparation of operators. Here, it is well to distinguish between three principle types of operators:

1. Those in a general field, of diffusion of psychosynthesis, who do not need any specialized certificate: if they have one, so much the better, but it is only necessary that they know psychosynthesis well.
2. The field of educators, in this it is necessary that there are teachers working in schools, or psychologists that are called on to perform psychological tests and that – in these occasions – can carry out much psychosynthesis.
3. This is the most difficult field: the therapeutic one. Here, as you know, there is something new: a national roll of psychotherapists is being prepared by the Ministry of Public Education, and it will include non-medical psychotherapists. We must remember that the majority of psychotherapists are not medical doctors, beginning with psychoanalysts.

The same is true for the followers of Jung: many of them are not doctors. It is thus opportune that also the psychosynthetic psychotherapists come forward and become peers of Psychoanalysts, of the followers of Jung and of others.

This has caused the foundation of an "Association of Therapeutic Psychosynthesis" – I would like to make it clear that this Association is opportune for legalization and official recognition; but it must be completely independent of the Istituto di Psicointegrazione because it – as a registered non-profit charity – is a cultural institute and is not able to carry out any therapy. Therefore, it is well that the Association be completely independent of the

Institute. Some of you can obviously work in both fields, but in a distinct way. In this panorama we can exchange ideas and proposals on what has been said.

Meditation

by Roberto Assagioli, M.D.

- Introduction
- What is Meditation
- The Process of Meditation
- Preparation
- Relaxation
- Concentration
- Types of Meditation
- Reflective Meditation
- Technical Suggestions on Reflective Meditation
- Receptive Meditation
- Stages of Receptive Meditation
- Silence
- Methods of Reception
- Inner Seeing
- Inner Hearing
- Inner Contact
- Urge to Action
- Registration
- Delayed Reception
- Dangers and Mistakes of Receptive Meditation

Introduction

There are today many approaches to meditation. Some are quite new; some have been known and practiced for thousands of years. The approach described here draws from classical Eastern systems, such as Raja Yoga, and Western psychological systems that include the transpersonal dimension, such as psychosynthesis.

It aims at expanding, elevating, and illuminating consciousness through the harmonious and integrated action of body, feelings, and the mind. It harnesses the considerable power of the mind, directing it toward higher or more profound states of consciousness. It is well-suited for many of us today as a bridging process, a mediatory means by which we can expand our awareness beyond our normal level of concrete mental activity, and reach to the world of meaning, of pure ideas and to the superconscious region, thus building a usable path between these realms. Insights that flow through this path permeate and vivify the whole

of our being, and as the process continues, we become more and more in harmony, with ourselves and with all that is around us.

What is Meditation

The urge to discover more about the inner side of life is stimulating many today to a new interest in meditation. In the past this kind of "higher thinking" was considered a passive, reflective form of devotion, but meditation as it is becoming widely practiced today is a positive and creative use of the mind, actively linking the inner and the outer worlds. It entails concentration, reflection, a clear conception and formulation of ideas or thoughts, and then considering and visualizing ways and means of relating them to life, thus taking into account the affective domain and physical activity. The usual contraposition of meditation on the one hand and action on the other is misleading. Meditation is inner action.

The "inner action" of thought is something that we use all the time, even though we may not notice it. Thought lies at the back of everything we do: building our attitudes, our relationships and our whole way of life. In the world of the mind are born the practical beginnings of everything that man creates on earth. From the architect's thinking before he makes his blueprints, to the scientist seeking a new formula, from the world statesman to the educator, the fabric of everyday life is being woven out of thinking. In this way the future is hourly being created, thinkers are building the pattern of things to come.

Each one of us can consciously use creative thinking, and with it participate in building the inner structure of the world that is to be. For it is not only the thought of the inventors, the scientists and the nations' leaders that is bringing in the new civilization – the weight of the mass of public thought and the power of all men's aspiration are bringing into being the circumstances and the conditions that we shall have tomorrow. Each of us can play a constructive part in this if we so choose.

The mind can become a great creative instrument as well as a vital "activator." Its vision can link us with our higher possibilities, and through it we can probe the outer boundary of our existing knowledge and catch sight of the world of meaning and values. This enables us to gather in the higher ideas of the true, the good, the needed, bringing them down to everyday recognition and making them part of life.

Creative thinking is a definite stage in objectifying ideas and higher concepts; and because thought is an energy we can use its power to develop the qualities, the attitudes, and the conditions that we think should prevail. If we use thought

consciously and creatively, we can bring about changes in ourselves and our lives, as well as in our environment and in the world.

But thought often plays through us unconsciously and haphazardly, and frequently it has us instead of our having it, bringing worry and depression and sweeping us along with its own force. If we use it selfishly it can even be destructive. Therefore, at the same time as we realize the power of thought we must see the vital need for right thought, for *right* motive behind thought, and for right understanding of its subtle processes.

The Process of Meditation

Most people have only a vague idea of what meditation really is, and we need to clarify how it is accomplished, how it functions, what it achieves, and the service it can give.

Thought is an energy, an unseen but real power, and through meditation we can focus it to build, to feed, to maintain an idea, a quality or a rule or law of life. As we have said, meditation is inner action – action in the inner worlds. There are many kinds of inner action; all thinking, hoping, imagining, all aspiration and desire, are activities of this type, but they are generally carried on without conscious intention and without a sense of responsibility. *Meditation, on the other hand is conscious deliberate inner action to fulfil a specific purpose.*

We can get a good idea of the different kinds of action and their definite stages, which we propose to master in meditation – from the analogy of a missile being sent into space, pursuing its course and returning to earth. A corresponding cycle takes place in the meditation process.

The first stage is that of projection. The propelling energy of the missile conquering the downward pull of gravity projects it upwards into orbit around the earth, or beyond. In the same way we can project our centre of consciousness upwards, through the sphere of feeling and imagination, and penetrate to the world of thought and even further – to transpersonal levels. Our propelling energy is that of aspiration, which has aptly been called "fiery aspiration", and we direct it – as in fact we must direct the whole meditation process by the great unrealized potency of the will.

The second stage for the missile is its approach to the gravitational field of another centre of attraction. In meditation this corresponds to coming into contact with some higher centre of energy or life, some realm of thought, or some specific region in the inner worlds.

The next stage is the delicate one of utilizing the pull from the new centre. If this is rightly achieved, the self-propelling energy still existing in the missile will enable it to circle around the new centre, keeping in orbit. The same is true of the individual consciousness in penetrating to higher, inner levels. It has to attain the region towards which it is directed, but must maintain its freedom and not become a prisoner of it. It must remain in that area only as long as is required for its purpose, that is, the experiencing and registering of whatever can be gathered from the centre with which rapport is being made, or from the region of thought attained. Then we should bring the meditation to a close harmoniously and intentionally.

The essential task of receiving information from the instruments in the missile corresponds to our registering and rightly interpreting the ideas that we find in the higher realms; and, finally, all of this has to be utilized and integrated into our existing knowledge and experience, as is the information obtained from the missile.

There is still a further point in this analogy; control of the missiles and knowledge of their position with respect to the earth is maintained throughout their whole course. So it is with meditation, conscious control should never be lost. It is possible to fall into a state of unconsciousness, but projection to this extent is wrong and dangerous. Meditation must always be a *conscious* process, we must remain fully aware the whole time, and from this point of awareness – here, where we are – direct the whole process, watching it, controlling it, and regulating its extension and duration.

Preparation

Much of the success of meditation depends upon right and careful preparation. To begin with, as quiet a place as possible should be chosen at least until we are used to meditating – where we can feel that our privacy will not be disturbed. We should sit in a comfortable position. While the Eastern way of sitting cross-legged has the advantage of keeping the spine erect, it is a difficult posture for those who are not accustomed to it, and is not necessary. An effective preliminary to meditation is to read or study something connected with the theme we will be meditating on, and if there is time we should do this as it greatly facilitates the tuning in of the mind.

Relaxation

Next, we should try to eliminate all physical, emotional, and mental tension, because such tension is a quite useless expenditure of both nervous and muscular energy. Relaxation is an art that has to be worked at, and it is not as simple as it may appear. In trying to achieve it, we are apt to fall into the

opposite extreme – a state of passivity which ends in drowsiness. The aim is to eliminate all superfluous tension, while retaining the muscular tone necessary for alertness and for full attention to what we are doing.

The various techniques of relaxation cannot be described here, but there are many books which go fully into the different aspects of this subject. One of the most effective ways of achieving relaxation is through slow, rhythmic breathing. But breathing exercises should be done with caution, for they can be harmful if carried out too strenuously. An adequate exercise consists of a deep breath with short pauses held at the end of each in-breathing and each out-breathing. This can be done about ten times, rhythmically and slowly. There should be no sense of strain, either in breathing or during the pauses, steady rhythm rather than length of time being the aim. The respiratory muscles should be relaxed with the out-breathing; this "letting go" of tension can then be diffused to all the other muscles of the body and a general relaxation achieved.

Physical relaxation is a first and necessary step to the more important one of psychological relaxation. The latter comprises emotional and mental relaxation, which have to be achieved in two distinct phases corresponding to the two different levels of the inner worlds on which we will be working – the emotional and mental. Each has to be handled separately and in its own way.

If, after relaxing physically, we begin to observe ourselves psychologically, we generally find that various feelings come and go. These emotions have to subside. It is not good to repress them forcibly, but the very fact of calmly observing them from what might be called "above", without being identified with them, causes them gradually to lose their hold and their intensity, so that they cease to sway us and quiet down – if not completely, at least to a degree in which they no longer constitute a serious obstacle; and that is good enough.

This forms the first part of psychological relaxation; the second part is mental relaxation. By nature the mind is restless and in continuous activity, and this is increased by the high tempo of modern life and also by emotional stimulation. If we have managed to exclude for the moment the activities of ordinary life and have quieted the emotions, it will be less difficult to deal with the natural restlessness of the mind itself.

This cannot be done completely in the preparatory stage; it will be the chief task in the first part of the actual meditation, which is concentration. In the preparatory stage it is enough to reach a certain degree of dis-identification from the mind's activity and to resist being carried by it this way and that, distinguishing this activity from the consciousness of the self, whom we could call the "Observer." This provides what might be regarded as a platform from which to go on to the actual meditation. Here, also, the aim is not to suppress by

violence, or by an effort which immediately brings tension and therefore defeats its object. The method to be used is more that of attrition, of not feeding with interest any stray thoughts or images which remain in the mind; they will not then interfere seriously with the inner action of meditation. This preparation could be described as making room in and around the centre of consciousness for the exercises of concentration that are to follow, yet without attempting to clear the whole area completely at this stage.

Concentration

In taking up the subject of concentration the first point to realize is the difference between spontaneous or automatic concentration and deliberate controlled concentration. They are different, both in nature and in the way they work. What is called spontaneous concentration is the functioning of the mind under the impulse of a strong interest, desire or feeling, which keeps it working along a certain line. A typical example is the businessman as he plans for the success of his organization. Another example is the student's concentration on the subjects on which he expects to be examined.

Those who can concentrate effectively in this way are under the illusion that their power of concentration is good. And it does indicate a certain aspect of it, but the ability to keep the mind on a task or subject when driven by intense interest, need or fear, does not necessarily mean that it can be done when that incentive is lacking. The fact is that when we try to concentrate on some abstract subject, or on something which entails no personal interest or benefit, we find it much more difficult and frequently discover that we have no real control over our minds after all.

It is evidence that our emotions, drives, and thoughts play, almost dramatically, through us and are the strong forces in our lives. In other words, we are driven by them and are not ourselves the choosing, directing, controlling factor.

This is one reason why the more purely mental or spiritual interests have not the driving potential of the usual personal interests of the average man. Another reason is an inherent difference in the nature of these interests. Abstract subjects are "thinner"; they are more intangible for the mind to take hold of and focus on. The mind, being less accustomed to this subtler and more difficult way of functioning, is reluctant to face it and turns away. It is a new kind of activity, and generally speaking any new subject or new area of knowledge presents difficulties to begin with. Our minds do not like starting to work in new fields; in those with which they are familiar much work has already been done; there is a background or experience and there are connections which make the work easier. A new subject requires much more concentration and effort.

The realization that we are not the masters of our minds may shock us, but if it does, that is good; it will galvanize us into making efforts towards such mastery, and will help to provide the emotional incentive which was lacking previously. Another important result of these discoveries about ourselves is awareness that there is a difference between ourselves and our minds and emotion. The unsuccessful effort to keep the mind at work has shown that there is a conflict and conflict means that there are two factions which disagree. This awareness of conflict is valuable, therefore, in bringing to light the difference between the "I" with its own will, and the mind, which is often unruly, reluctant or lazy, and has, in a way, a life of its own.

These preliminary but vital recognitions provide a foundation for the task of learning to concentrate the mind *at will*. They bring understanding of ourselves and give the incentive we need to become masters of this precious instrument, the mind, which is so excellent a servant when dominated, but which gives such trouble when it goes its own way.

The initial technique to be used in acquiring mastery over the mind, and ability to concentrate at will is to begin with concentration on simple and neutral subjects which have no interest for us. In this way we learn to hold the mind steady without the help of personal interest and desire. There are many types of such exercises in concentration which can be practiced. Visual perception is a simple one and consequently a good one to work with first. It is a training of attention, not of thought processes, and it develops an elementary ability to focus the attention, which is the first step in the more advanced and complex processes of meditation on abstract subjects.

A simple exercise in visual perception is to observe a set of objects rapidly and accurately. For instance, observe the contents of a room for half a minute, and then write as detailed an account of them as possible. The same exercise can be done by looking in a shop window or examining a picture.

Exercises in observing outward objects are a preparation for concentration on inner objects – on inner pictures or images. An exercise which provides a transition between the two is to observe a picture for twenty or thirty seconds, then close the eyes and try to keep the image of the picture in the "mind's eye" or "inner eye." We all have this power of imagination in the sense of being able to picture objects, faces and so on, which are familiar. It is more developed and vivid in some people than others, but for the present purpose it is not so much the vividness which is important as the power to keep the picture steady before the mind's eye, and to be able to concentrate the attention on it. Looking at the picture for a time helps considerably in getting a clear image, and therefore in the holding of it.

A second exercise of this type is to evoke an image and keep it steady for a short time without having looked at it just before. One can start with some familiar object, such as a building that is seen every day, a view one knows, or a member of the family. The image should be built precisely, with concentration on the details, and then held steady for a certain time.

Here begins a real fight – an interesting but sometimes exasperating skirmish – between our will to keep the image steady and the fluid nature of the imagination, which is accustomed to pass from one thing to another in rapid and often disordered succession. It will play all sorts of tricks; it will distort the image, enlarge, add some alien element to it, divide it into two or more parts, substitute something else for it, in fact do anything and everything except let the picture remain quietly before the mind's eye.

This fact is again revealing. Once more we have undeniable evidence that we are not the masters of our mechanism and that there is conflict between it and ourselves. It is here that the process of self-mastery really begins in the sense of controlling, directing, and using – at will – our whole mechanism.

Apart from these specific exercises, there is ample opportunity for us to train our concentration during everyday life. It means simply giving full attention to the matter at hand without letting the mind wander. Habitual actions are frequently carried out in a more or less dreamy way, with stray thoughts about extraneous things playing through the mind. This creates a state of passive dissociation which can grow to harmful proportions, and is in any case a waste of energy. Concentration on the other hand enhances the ability to live in the present in general, and specifically in that focused section or area of the present where our immediate activity lies.

There is a higher and more important form of concentration than those types so far dealt with. It is that of the Observer or inner Spectator who, perfectly concentrated himself, observes the flowing panorama of the psychological life – called by William James the "mind stream" – and in a detached way perceives it, assesses it and, when needed, intervenes to change it. Such an inner attitude is not at all easy to maintain consistently. Being what might be termed "on the bank" of the mind stream, we tend to be drawn into it by its currents. The attention is easily caught by some surge of emotion, by some interesting idea, by some impelling drive, and we have to draw it back continually to the center of concentration, to the self, the awareness, the part in us which is persistent and unchanging throughout all the variations of the psychological flow.

The key to acquiring the power of concentration is, as in every other skill, prolonged patience and repeated practice. Two extremes should be avoided. One is doing these apparently uninteresting exercises in a more or less perfunctory

way, as a kind of routine; this would be too superficial to serve much purpose. The other extreme to be avoided is working with them too strenuously and forcibly. Nor should we attempt to do these exercises when tired for then there is little likelihood of success, and any progress made will be at the cost of too great a strain.

Another point is that we should not be discouraged by initial lack of success, especially the inability to maintain concentration for a certain time. At first it is good enough if we can achieve real concentration for ten and then twenty seconds; a minute or two is quite long. So it is better to carry out repeated short exercises with some success than try forcibly to keep the attention fixed for a longer time.

Finally there are two helpful attitudes which, as the Observer, each of us should try to maintain through all the experiments and exercises. The first of these is patience with ourselves or, more accurately, with our mechanism – the attitude that we would adopt towards an unruly child whose cooperation we hoped to gain in the end. The other attitude is confidence that persistence will bring success. The following words of Hermann Keyserling – from his *Travel Diary of a Philosopher* – will reinforce our confidence as well as emphasize the value of what we are attempting to achieve:

Undoubtedly the power of concentration is the real propelling power of the whole of our psychic mechanism. Nothing heightens our capacity for performance as much as its increase; every success, no matter in what domain, can be traced back to the intelligent use of this power. No obstacle can resist permanently the exceptional power of utmost concentration. Attention forces every problem sooner or later to reveal all of its aspects which are capable of recognition by a specific nature.

Types of Meditation

In keeping with conventional practice, we can call *meditation* the process of sustained, controlled mental attention and activity. Under this general heading qualifying words will then define the various specific kinds, stages, and techniques. We have already dealt with the first stage of meditation-concentration. The principal types of meditation should now be looked at briefly, before we go on to deal with some of them in detail.

First there is *reflective meditation* which is a strictly mental process. It is sequential, coordinated thinking on or about a definite subject, theme, word, or thought – such as those which are called "seed thoughts"; this is an apt term because the original or starting thought is the "seed" of all the subsequent development of the subject.

Then there is what can be called *receptive meditation* because its purpose is the reception by the mind of "light" on some subject, truth or realization.

It is important to realize that *receptive* does not mean passive or negative; it indicates, instead, a state of intense alertness without any autonomous functioning. It can be compared to listening or trying to see something which is far away, or, using electronics terms, to the mind acting as a receiving station and trying to tune itself to the transmitting station. This transmitting station is primarily the Transpersonal Self; the process is called inspiration, or in some cases intuition, and the result is illumination of the mind. But the effects of such meditation are not limited to that alone, for the new and higher truths perceived have a transforming and elevating power over the whole personality; they change the whole man.

The third type is *creative meditation* which aims first at the building of a dynamic, effective, well-defined thought or idea, then at changing it with the energy of feeling, and finally at animating or propelling by will, so that it fulfils a definite function or purpose; this function may work out either in the inner worlds, or in the world of outer action by supplying a pattern or an incentive.

There is still another aspect of meditation which has been called *elevation* or *ascent*. Initially it leads to receptive meditation. Here the endeavour is to raise the centre of consciousness deliberately to ever higher levels of the inner world. It is like mounting an inner ladder towards the Transpersonal Self, and sometimes contacting it for a brief moment. When the highest point has been reached, an active interplay between the mind and the Self may take place; this has been called by Martin Buber and others the *inner dialogue*.

Reflective Meditation

The simplest definition of the first kind of meditation mentioned *reflective meditation* – is just "thinking". This is a correct definition as far as it goes, but it does not go very far, for generally we do not give much thought to thinking! We imagine that, being intelligent, we can *think* whereas just thinking about anything that interests us is in fact only an elementary state of mental activity.

It has been said that usually the mind "thinks in us", rather than that we think. This means that the activity of the mind is a process that as a rule goes on pretty much by itself promoted by stimuli or drives of different kinds and flowing in a disorderly way, one train of thought driven out by a second, the second by a third, and so on. To describe this state of affairs in a more exact way, we can say that normally the mind is largely independent from the "I" and from the will; it is interfered with all the time by emotions, drives, images, and external stimuli, and reacts to them. Such mental activity scarcely deserves the name of real

thinking, for it is only when a strong urge or interest keeps the mind at work that it functions in an orderly and productive way.

Spontaneous – what we might call unconscious or unrealized – meditation is often practiced by people who do not give it that name. The scientist working out a problem, the philosopher thinking out a concept, the business man intelligently planning the organization of his affairs, are all examples of this, for they are all demonstrating coherent organized use of the mind – of the thinking function.

As a preliminary to true meditation, we must realize that the mind is in fact a tool, an inner tool, from which we must dis-identify ourselves in order to facilitate its proper use. The practice of concentration teaches us the first step – how to control the mind, how to keep it steady and one-pointed in the chosen direction. Now comes the next step – that of not keeping it still but making it proceed, walk, so to speak, along the way we want it to go, towards some chosen goal.

Thinking in this sense means reflecting or brooding upon a given, well-defined subject, and working out all the implications, ramifications, and meanings implicit in it. And meditation can be said to be an unbroken flow of thought toward the object of concentration.

The first requirement, then for developing the art of thinking is to give close attention to the actual process of thinking, for example, to notice immediately when its course begins to deviate as a result of either emotional reaction or preconceived mental attitude, or – as is frequently the case – in response to the process of mechanical association, which carries the mind through a series of allied subjects to a point far from the starting place.

The second requirement is *persistence* – thinking *through*. Here some rather curious things happen. At first, after a few minutes of reflective thinking, it may seem that the subject has been exhausted, that there is nothing left to think about. But if we persist through this blank period and continue to reflect, we begin to discover other unrealized aspects; we may even find what appeared at first to be a dearth of content is, in fact, an overabundance – what the French call an "embarras de richesses," Then a new difficulty appears – how to explore all the now perceived aspects and complexities of the subject, and how to deal with the inrush of new thought-trains.

Innumerable subjects are suitable for reflective meditation, and mention can be made here only of the different categories. Psychological and spiritual qualities offer an almost endless series – courage, harmony, serenity, joy, will, and so on. Symbols constitute another type.

One can also meditate on a phrase embodying a thought. Such "seed thoughts" are, of course, also innumerable, but they can be divided broadly into two classes; first those that appear simple and obvious, but which turn out to conceal a world of meaning; second, those that are formulated in a paradoxical and therefore challenging way. These are often in the form of an apparent contradiction, the reconciliation of which lies in a higher or more comprehensive synthesis of the two opposite terms, for instance –

- "Act with interest and without interest."
- "Suffer with joy." (Which does not mean to enjoy suffering)
- "Make haste slowly." (An old Latin saying, "festina lente.")
- "Live in the eternal and in the moment."
- "See action in inaction and inaction in action."

Technical Suggestions on Reflective Meditation

The first suggestion is never to concentrate on negative aspects but to direct the attention to those that are positive. The second is to write down immediately any worthwhile thoughts or conclusions arrived at. Concepts that seem clear and vivid at the time have a way of disappearing from the consciousness very quickly and are lost – at least temporarily – if not fixed right away. The formulation of thoughts verbally also forces us to clarity of thinking and precision, and exposes any confusion and vagueness in our minds. The process of writing is itself a stimulus to meditation, and may lead to further valuable thoughts, "flowing from the pen," so to speak. Writing in this sense is a meditation technique; it definitely helps in keeping the mind oriented and active along the desired lines and in maintaining its focus.

The length of time to be spent on meditation varies, but to begin with it should not exceed ten or fifteen minutes; that is quite long enough. The length of period during which one subject should be used as the theme also varies, but it should not be less than a week, and after some practice one often finds a month none too long. In fact some subjects appear to be virtually inexhaustible. A good method is to meditate on certain themes cyclically, that is, a series of subjects may be listed and each one be used in turn for a week, after which the series is gone through again.

At this point the time factor should be mentioned. This is a problem that everyone comes up against. Nearly all feel that they have so much to do, their lives are so complicated, there is so little privacy today and the demands of work and family leave so little spare time or energy, that, although they realize the value of a time of meditation each day, they feel that they cannot undertake it. These difficulties are real. The whole organization and machinery of modern living take no account at all of the rights of the inner life, and so the whole trend

at present is against it. But in spite of these formidable problems, if we feel the value of the inner life strongly enough and really intend to give it some time, we can usually find a way of making room in the day for at least a short meditation. Ten or fifteen minutes is not a long period to fit into a twenty-four hour program.

It is plain, however, that it is almost impossible to have ideal conditions for this in modern life, and any quiet time that we find in the day is an oasis to be taken advantage of. A good rhythm to establish is that of meditating in the same place first thing every morning, before entering into the melee of the day. Regularity is most valuable, but we should not be dependent upon such rhythm and, even if it takes longer to attune ourselves to the inner work and is more difficult, it is better to learn to do this quite independently of our surroundings. Each one of us has his own problems on this and each has to solve them as best he can.

The rewards of reflective meditation are many. First it brings increasing proficiency in using the mental tool and a growing sense of mastery of the mind. This, of course, is reached only by degrees, and We cannot expect to achieve perfection; but even a fair degree of control of the mind is gratifying and most valuable, for the mind is a bad master, but a most useful servant. Other results will emerge if we seriously undertake and continue this form of inner action, which is also a necessary preliminary step to the other types of meditation. It begins our training in this field of work and lays the foundations for all future achievement.

Receptive Meditation

Receptive meditation is a most valuable part of our mental training, but, although it may seem quite simple, it is actually the most difficult kind of meditation and one in which we are quite likely to commit mistakes. There are also real dangers attached to it and we might, therefore, feel inclined to leave it alone. Indeed, it is not advisable for everyone, but there are good reasons for training ourselves in it and adopting it as a regular part of our inner action, and so its right and safe use will be explained.

First of all we should realize how invaluable receptive meditation is and how helpful is the insight it can bring, both in our spiritual realizations and in guiding our personal lives. Second, increased sensitivity, or receptivity to "impressions" is a natural and spontaneous result of inner harmonization, and of relationship or contact with the Transpersonal Self. Third, if rightly practiced it is not only without dangers, but is of great help in avoiding the dangers of *unconscious* receptivity. This point is so important and of such constant application that it will be good to deal with it at some length.

We should start with a clear recognition that we are exposed to countless individual, group, and mass influences all the time. These last take the form of waves of excitement, of panic, or of hostility which sweep through humanity, or large sections of it, and sway or even engulf those who do not know how to deal with them. These waves or impacts, increasingly recognized today under the general term of "vibrations", may reach us through the normal channels of the senses, telepathically through psychic impressions, or from mental levels.

It is most useful – although it may shock us – to realize how much we are tools or victims of influences of which we are unconscious, or to which we yield in a passive way. An outstanding example – which can be regarded as a gigantic experiment in mass suggestion and in influencing behaviour is advertising, the effectiveness of which can be evaluated in billions of dollars. At first it was used more or less empirically, although with unconscious psychological skill; but today it is being used quite deliberately, consciously utilizing definite psychological techniques.

It might seem, therefore, that we should try to become non-receptive to outer influences, but this is not the true solution. It is practically impossible to be non-receptive and it is also undesirable. We do not live in isolation; we are intimately connected and interacting with both individuals and groups. Isolation would mean self-centeredness, and this is such an unnatural condition that it often proves painful and even unbearable. The anguish of solitude produced by isolation has been described vividly by several existentialist writers, such as Kirkegaard and Kafka.

Human relations imply receptivity, and lack of receptivity excludes love. The true solution requires clear thought and skill in action, and is arrived at through three stages of inner activity – awareness, control of mastery, and wise utilization. These functions of receptive meditation offer the best way to turn the liabilities, the mistakes, and the dangers of receptivity into assets. It is well to realize and remember that receptive meditation is a definite form of *meditation* – it is a *conscious and controlled mental activity*. It is quite different from merely psychic receptivity which opens us to influences of an emotional and imaginative character, and its mental quality enables us to discriminate between the various kinds of impression, to register them correctly and later to interpret them rightly. These points will be developed further when describing the techniques of receptive meditation.

Stages of Receptive Meditation

As the first condition of safe receptive meditation is the ability to keep our consciousness steadily on the mental level of awareness, it should be done only after the preparation described as necessary for reflective meditation. That

means we must go through the stages of relaxation, mental preparation by means of appropriate reading, dis-identification of the self from the body and the emotional life, the elevation of the centre of consciousness and the achievement of the inner attitude of the Observer. This is a condition of positive, wide-awake awareness. It is also advisable at this point to make whenever possible a short reflective meditation; this will consolidate the positive inner attitude and develop the ability to use the mind as an obedient tool.

To realize the difference between reflective and receptive meditation it is useful to consider the mind as an "inner eye", which in a certain respect it truly is. In reflective meditation the eye of the mind is directed, figuratively speaking, horizontally, trying to see beyond the apparent, or rightly interpret what has entered the field of consciousness. On the other hand, in receptive meditation we direct the mind's eye "upwards" and try to discern what is "above", on a higher level than that on which we are aware. This can also be described in terms of hearing – we try to catch some inner sound or message coming from a higher or subtler region.

Silence

This stage should be defined carefully, because there are various kinds of silence. The safe and true kind needed is a *positive* silence, that is, the maintaining of an alert inner stillness for the desired period, in which we eliminate as much as possible all the spontaneous activity of the mind.

This phase of silence is a necessary condition for receiving and registering higher influences. Someone endeavouring to reach this inner silence once wrote of it in the following amusing way: "I was in deep meditation and knew I had reached a very clear and lucid place and like a flash came the thought: 'I know that I am in a very, real inner place and yet I am deaf and blind, seeing and hearing nothing.' Another split second and there came a sort of humouring response: 'If you were also dumb you might possibly see and hear.'"

To achieve and maintain the inner silence is a difficult task which calls for persistence and a firm determination; it is a sustained act of the will. Our psychological mechanism is not accustomed to such discipline, it resents it and tries in every way to shake it off. A flood of impressions, sensations, emotions, images, and thoughts invades the field of consciousness and a fierce fight for mastery begins. It seems we will never succeed in expelling the intruders which appear to come from every side at once. But it is not necessary to be drastic; too strenuous an effort is undesirable and defeats its own ends.

There are several techniques we can use; one is to repeat over and over a phrase or word; another is to evoke an image and keep it clear and steady at the center

of the consciousness. The best words and images for this purpose are those which suggest a state of calm, of peace, or silence. An effective phrase for example (from a Hymn used in the Greek Mysteries) is: "Be silent, O strings, that a new melody may come to me." Images such as the following are helpful in stilling the mind: a quiet lake reflecting the blue of the sky; a majestic mountain peak; the starry sky in the stillness of the night.

Those who have already had some training or practice in meditation will be able to use the technique of watching the flow of the mental stream in a detached, dispassionate way, as something objective and not belonging to oneself. If we succeed in maintaining this positive watching attitude long enough the stream of emotions and thoughts becomes slower and slower until it becomes still.

An opposite condition, that of drowsiness sometimes occurs. This is to be firmly avoided because it is not conducive to the receiving of higher impressions and, instead, it may bring about a condition which is undesirable and even dangerous.

The achievement of a true inner silence is well worth the effort and the persistent training which it takes. Besides being necessary for receptive meditation it has a value of its own; it is conducive to a condition of harmony, peace, and quiet joy, and it produces a sense of expansion of consciousness; it is also essentially restful and refreshing.

Methods of Reception

When a state of silence has been reached, that is, after a period of effort and struggle to achieve silence, then we are ready for the further stage of reception. The inner attitude is one of quiet watchfulness and patient waiting; it can also be described as a state of keen but unemotional interest in what may happen and of what we may become aware. The source from which we await impression, and to which therefore we direct our one-pointed attention, should be the Transpersonal Self. That is the sure source of true impression. But it is not the only source; impressions from other sources, if these are high and true, are often channelled or conveyed through the Self to the conscious mind.

Inner Seeing

The methods of reception are various; an impression may reveal itself to our consciousness through *seeing*, *hearing*, *contact*, *urge to action* and in other ways. The most frequent is perhaps through seeing or illumination. The mind is indeed symbolically an inner eye, and the symbolism of vision is often used. We speak of insight, of illumination, of "seeing" in the sense of realizing the meaning or significance of some fact or event, and we talk of "seeing" the solution of a problem and of having a "bright" idea. Sometimes an abstract

geometrical figure or some other symbolic form enters into the field of consciousness. However, a series of concrete images and forms and colours may also appear, but these are the product of the imagination and are not mental in character. During receptive meditation this latter type of image should not be paid attention to or at the most can be observed quietly for a short time without undue interest.

A higher form of spiritual "seeing" can be called intuition. This word may be misleading because it has been used in different senses. Etymologically it is connected with vision, it means "seeing into." Intuition in its higher and purer sense can be considered to be a direct, suprarational understanding or comprehension of the true nature and reality of something – comprehension of its true quality, purpose, and essence. It is quite different from what are called "hunches," which are psychic impressions about people or events of a personal character and having personal interest.

Inner Hearing

The second way of receiving impressions is that of inner hearing. Here, too, we must discriminate carefully between the psychic hearing of voices and the much higher inner spiritual hearing. This discrimination is not easy and calls for a subtler sense than that needed for discriminating between images and true spiritual insight. The difference can be termed one of *quality and level*. After some practice in receptivity one becomes more and more aware of the level on which the consciousness functions. If it functions on the emotional and imaginative levels the voices heard are apt to give messages or impressions of a personal character, highly coloured with feeling of some kind.

Inspiration coming from high levels, on the other hand, is generally impersonal in character. The messages are short, incisive, and meaningful. They are generally concerned with one's spiritual advancement and will contain wise advice, perhaps pointing out some fault to be eliminated, some spiritual quality to be developed or some high aim to be attained. Sometimes the message is symbolic in character, even though the phrase may appear to have a concrete meaning. Such was the case with the well-known message received by St. Francis – "Go, and restore my church." He interpreted it at first as an injunction to build up a half-ruined little church, but later he recognized that it was a command to restore the Roman Church of his time.

To this kind of impression belong also many artistic, literary, and musical inspirations. The poet or musician has the impression that something in himself or somebody else dictates them; he seems to "hear" inwardly, and the poem or idea or theme appears spontaneously in his field of consciousness. The symbol

of the Muse inspiring or speaking to the attentive ear of the poet has expressed this through the ages.

Sometimes a *dialogue* is established between the conscious personality and the Self; a question put by the meditating mind receives a prompt and clear inner answer which seems to formulate itself and appear to the consciousness. If the personality comments on it and replies, a further reaction is then registered. This dialogue has been dealt with in its more general sense by Martin Buber in several of his books, and he applies it to all kinds of spiritual relationships. This dialogue can be facilitated through the use of one of the symbols of the Self – that of the Old Wise Man.

Inner Contact

The third form of receptivity can be called *contact*, because it is analogous to the physical sense of touch or feeling by contact. But this expression should not be taken too literally; it corresponds to our meaning. When we say we "contact somebody," or are "in touch with someone." It does not mean that we touch the person physically, but indicates a relationship, a rapport, an easy interplay at will. The same can be said of *inner contact*, alluding specifically to the Self. It means an easy rapport or alignment with the Self which permits receptivity to its influence and awareness of its quality and nature, and gradually enables us to identify or unify ourselves in consciousness with it, however partially and momentarily.

By this inner nearness, by this "touch" of the Self, we are harmonized, vivified, recharged with energy, or with that which we specifically need at the time, and which the Self is trying to convey to us. Its effects are clarifying, and enlightening; we are filled with certainty, courage, joy; we feel renewed and ready to go back to the arena of personal life and meet its emergencies and challenges. We feel that some higher power has descended upon us and added a certain degree of blending or infusion by the Self of the radiation from superconscious levels.

Urge to Action

The fourth way in which we may receive impression from the Self is through an *urge to action*. We become aware of it as a definite urge to do something, to undertake a task or duty in some field of service, or sometimes it may be an urge toward inner action of some sort, to the changing of something in ourselves. This type of impression is what the Quakers who have practiced extensively this art of receptive meditation and silence, call "concern."

Again we need to discriminate carefully between urges coming from the Self or some high, superconscious level, and those coming from the middle or lower unconscious. The way in which they appear in the consciousness is similar, but a difference will be found in the quality and content of the urge. Whenever it takes the form of a call to a great mission or to some action of personal advantage we should regard it with suspicion. An urge of this type is normally of lower origin and is spurious and should be dismissed.

Registration

After reception comes the stage of registration. Every impression whatever its type or the way in which it is received, should be accurately and immediately registered in writing. As mentioned previously in connection with reflective meditation, the higher impressions are often vivid and clear at the moment of reception, but they have a curious tendency to disappear rapidly from the field of consciousness and if not caught and registered at once they are apt to be lost. Also, the very fact of formulating them and writing them down helps us to understand them better; sometimes during writing the impression will develop, and we will continue to receive it. Writing can, in fact, be used as a technique for evoking inspiration; it creates a convenient channel for the higher impressions. But while writing one should always remain alert and fully aware, not permitting any form of "automatic" writing, which can easily have undesirable and even dangerous effects.

Delayed Reception

Another interesting aspect of receptivity is the *delayed reception of impression*. It often seems that nothing happens during receptive meditation; we remain in a state of blankness and do not become aware of anything new except, perhaps, a sense of quiet, rest, and refreshment. But this does not necessarily mean the meditation has been useless and unsuccessful, for quite frequently some impression or inspiration will come into our consciousness later in the day or even another day. It may be in another meditation or at some time when we are engaged in quite different activities; it may be in some moment of relaxation or on waking in the morning, but whenever it is we will recognize a connection between the apparently unsuccessful meditation and the subsequent inspiration. This connection will be evident when the answer which we sought to some question or problem flashes into our minds, but there can also be a less dramatic but equally true delayed reception of impression to which we should be alert.

Therefore, after meditation we should always keep an inner attitude of watchfulness and attentiveness – what is called, when developed, a "meditative attitude" – during the whole day. We can train ourselves to develop a state of

dual consciousness, that is being normally concentrated on our outer activity while at the same time keeping a part of our attention turned toward the inner world. This is the "attitude of the Observer", watching what happens both in the outer world and on the various inner levels of life.

Dangers and Mistakes of Receptive Meditation

There are several possible dangers which are real and therefore should be understood and carefully offset. The two main dangers are negativity or passivity on the one hand and over stimulation or excitation on the other. A state of passivity allows the intrusion into the fields of consciousness of forces or elements coming from the unconscious, including its lower levels. They are not always recognized, but even when they are it may be difficult to offset their influence and resist their onrush. The difficulty is even greater when they delude us by an alluring appearance; they may seem harmless or even of a high order, yet not only are they without real value, but they can be entirely misleading.

The consciousness can also be invaded by influences from sources outside the *individual* unconscious. Using a general expression, we can say that they come from the collective unconscious; this term may include general psychic currents, general symbols and forms (called by Jung "archetypes"), and specific group centres of influence. This field is extensive and as yet relatively little known and we cannot enter here into further discussion of the subject. It is enough for our present purpose to point out the reality of the danger.

The chief safeguard against this danger is a constant positive watchfulness, as has been said already. Another safeguard is the striving to make a clear distinction between spiritual impressions and the multifarious psychic influences of a lower kind. Psychic phenomena have no inherent value toward spiritual or even personal development, and undue interest in them can become a definite sidetrack to our growth. It is wise to remember that primitive people and even animals have psychic faculties. Scientific investigation of such phenomena on the other hand has its definite place, but that is quite a different matter and it requires different methods from those used in receptive meditation.

The other danger which must be guarded against is *over-stimulation*. This is independent of both the nature and the source of the impressions received, for even a high spiritual influence, if it rushes into the personality with full force, can cause undesirable effects in some cases; effects which range from nervous tension and exhaustion to emotional excitement, fanaticism, excessive and feverish activity, or manifestations of uncontrolled psychic phenomena. But undesirable consequences can be prevented by wisely regulating the practice of meditation or by suspending it for a time when there are indications of trouble.

The reality of the dangers certainly calls for caution but should not arouse fear or discourage the practice of meditation. Everything effective can be a source of danger; even the most beneficial medicine can be harmful if taken in excessive doses. And to use another analogy, both inner ascensions and mountain climbing can be dangerous, but with proper preparation, caution, and skill in action the dangers are minimized – and in the case of meditation the benefits far outweigh the risks.

It should be repeated that receptive meditation rightly carried out – that is, with constant, positive watchfulness – and followed by discriminating and wise interpretation of the results, can protect effectively from influences and suggestions coming from either the outer or the inner worlds which may not have been previously recognized or satisfactorily dealt with. Meditation focuses the consciousness on the mental level, from which it can on the one hand exercise an intelligent guidance over the realm of emotion, imagination, and psychic phenomena, and on the other receive light, inspiration, and power from above.



C. G. Jung and Psychosynthesis, by Roberto Assagioli

According to Roberto Assagioli then C.G. Jung's analytical Psychology is very close to psychosynthesis. In this article he compares the two therapeutic approaches.

Carl Gustav Jung and Psychosynthesis

By Roberto Assagioli, M.D.

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Lecture 1

Among psychotherapists, Jung is one of the closest and most akin to the conceptions and practice of psychosynthesis. But the body of his work is so large; his range covers so many different fields, that a complete examination of it would require a sizable book. I shall thus have to limit myself to a comparative survey of some of the fields that are more directly concerned with psychosynthesis; that is, the structure of the psyche of the human being; the dynamics of the psychic energies; the methods of psychological therapy and education.

The comparative procedure is very productive, because it contrasts the respective positions as to their points of agreement and divergence. But comparison does not imply judgment or criticism; and I will attempt to be as objective as possible, to stick to facts, leaving the reader to draw his own conclusions.

Carl Gustav Jung was a keen investigator and an able therapist of the human being, who carried his work forward with a mind free from preconceptions and academic fetters. His life lacked any outstanding and dramatic event; born in Switzerland, he lived with his family mainly at Keshnacht, in a comfortable but not luxurious house agreeably situated on the shore of the Lake of Zurich. In the second part of his life, however, he travelled and spent considerable periods abroad (in India, Africa and America) studying the customs of the people and the characteristics of ancient civilizations. He had a kindly welcome for the

stream of visitors from all countries, and I have vivid memories of pleasant and animated conversations with him in his book lined study full of curious exotic objects.

He had great and diversified gifts: he possessed deep human feeling, an insatiable thirst for knowledge, an admirable integrity and intellectual modesty, coupled with a sincere recognition of his own limitations and those of others as well. In his *The Psychology of the Unconscious* he does not hesitate to admit:

“The work in this field is work for pioneers. I have often gone astray and many times have had to go back and learn from the beginning. But I am aware of it and for this reason am resigned to having to admit that, as the day emerges from the night, so truth is born of error.

But I have never been frightened by error, nor have I regretted it seriously. Scientific investigation was never for me the cow that gave milk, and not even a means of acquiring prestige, but an often bitter confrontation with reality forced on me by my daily psychological experience among the sick. For this reason not all I present is written with the brain but not a little with the heart, and the well-disposed reader is asked not to forget it when, as he follows the main course of the intellectual argument, he comes across breaks that are not satisfactorily repaired. A harmonious flow in the presentation can only be looked for when one writes of things already known. When, instead, prodded by the necessity of helping and curing, one seeks new means, one is forced to speak about matters that are not known.”

This confession of Jung's should be greatly appreciated. His understanding of the relativity of our knowledge and the recognition of the unavoidable subjective element in every researcher made him shun all systematic formulations and categorical statements. He took up a firm position on the ground of psychological experience and the empirical method, thus demonstrating a true scientific spirit. With it, however, he combined some lack of precision in thinking and writing and an unwillingness to admit a substantial reality transcending the strictly psychological sphere. But this limitation of his shows how unjust was the accusation of “mysticism” levelled at him many times. Such a charge reflects a lack of comprehension both of Jung and of mysticism. In reality the two standpoints are not only different but quite opposite. The mystic believes firmly in the existence of God, of a Universal Spirit; he is convinced of being, or of having been, in a state of union with that transcendental Reality. Jung, on the contrary, assumes an agnostic attitude towards it; he admits the subjective, “psychological” reality of the experience, but maintains that its essential, transcendental reality cannot be regarded as demonstrated. This can be considered a merit or a limitation, according to the point of view. In any case it

absolves Jung of the charge of mysticism—a serious one in the opinion of some people.

Let us turn now to the fundamental problem of psychology: *the structure of the psyche*. Jung has a keen sense of the complexity of the human psyche. To quote his own words “Our psychic nature is of an unimaginable complexity and diversity.” He has pointed out the relative autonomy of the various psychic contents and the existence, often quite incompatible, of different sub-personalities or, as he calls them, *personae* (in the Latin sense of “masks”).

He makes a distinction, however, between these *personae*—which also correspond to social, interpersonal roles and functions—and the “inner personality”. In his view, “The inner personality is the manner of one’s behaviour towards the inner psychic processes. I term the outer attitude, or outer character, the *persona*, the inner attitude I term the *anima*, or soul.” (*Psychological Types*, p. 593)

Concerning the psychic functions, Jung, as is well known, differentiates between four fundamental ones: sensation, feeling, thought and intuition. In this he differs from almost all other psychologists by his acceptance of the existence of the intuition as a normal psychological function of the human being. Psychosynthesis assumes the same position and lays much emphasis upon the importance and value of the intuition and upon the necessity of developing it. According to Jung, it is the psychological function that permits perceptions to arise from the unconscious and causes their contents to emerge as complete wholes. He continues: “Intuitive cognition, therefore, possesses an intrinsic character of certainty and conviction which enabled Spinoza to uphold the ‘*scientia intuitiva*’ as the highest form of cognition.”

Among the moderns, the greatest advocate of the intuition has been, not a psychologist, but a philosopher, Henri Bergson. Much as there is to be said about the intuition, I will mention only that there are various types or levels of it: the Bergsonian intuition, which occurs predominantly at the normal personality levels, is very different from that of Plotinus, which is purely spiritual. Jung asserts that the intuition exists at both these levels, on which it assumes different aspects but is fundamentally the same.

An important difference from psychosynthesis exists in connection with the psychological functions. Psychosynthesis maintains that Jung’s four fundamental functions do not provide for a complete description of the psychological life; but that there are other functions as fundamental, which merit inclusion as well. The first is the *imagination*. Jung’s lack of recognition of the imaginative function appears strange in view of his attributing such great importance to images and symbols. The explanation lies in his belief that

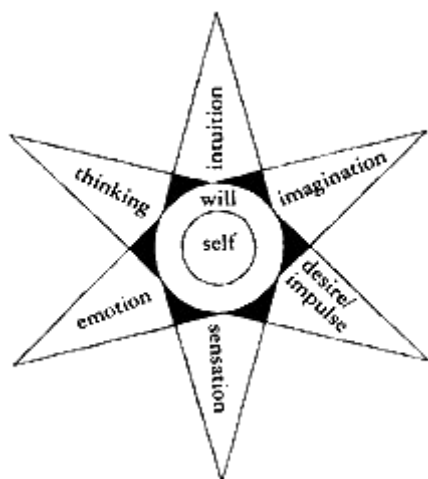
imaginative activity can evidence itself in all the four other functions. But he asserts this without demonstrating it or dealing with it. It seems impossible to admit that fantasy or imagination can be manifested in the function of sensation, which is a perception, by means of the senses, of the so-called external reality; that is, of impacts coming from the external world. On the other hand, other psychologists correctly give the imagination a fundamental place in psychological life.

Another group of functions that must be accorded a similar consideration are the *dynamic* or “*hormic*” functions (from the Greek word “*orme*” meaning tendency or impulse). This group includes the instincts, tendencies, impulses, desires and aspirations, in fact all that impels to action. Desire has been included among these hormic activities, though desire is generally conceived in terms of only, or at least principally, its subjective

aspect-desire as something one feels, an emotion one has. But this is solely its subjective aspect; in reality desire is or has a dynamic energy that impels to action. It has been said of it that it is a primordial tendency, the attractive impulse towards the not-self. *The Dictionary of Psychological and Psychoanalytical Terms* by H. and E. English (New York, Longmans Green, 1958), an excellent compilation of marked objectivity, defines desire as something active to which the terms “want”, “need”, “craving” to possess something are applied. *The Lexique de Philosophie* by A. Bertrand comments: “According to Spinoza, desire is the fundamental tendency to persist in being.”

It may seem surprising that, among these active tendencies, the will has not been included. But a fundamental difference exists between the drives, impulses and desires, on the one hand, and the will on the other. We can all verify the difference, even the opposition between them; and one might say that the “human condition” is a constant conflict between drives, impulses and desires and the will.

In a certain sense the will is something of a mystery, and if academic psychologists have neglected desire, they have for the most part ignored the existence of the will. I shall quote in this connection the *Dictionary of Psychological and Psychoanalytical Terms* already referred to. Under the item “Will” and “Voluntary action” it says: “Scientific psychology has not yet reached the point where it is possible to define how these terms should be used; and yet it does not seem possible to do without the concept of a praxis of behaviour patterns that should be termed voluntary and which differ from other patterns in various ill-defined ways.” Vague as this may be, one can detect a rather tight-lipped admission that there exists this disturbing something in psychology which is the will.



structure of the psyche.

One of the reasons for this mystery about the will lies in its intimate association with the “I”, the subject, the center of consciousness. In reality, all functions are functions of a living, self-conscious being and thus of an “I”. It is the “I” that feels and thinks, that imagines, desires and wills above all that wills—and therefore as one has in general a vague and dim sense of one’s self, of self-consciousness, it is not surprising that one’s sense of its fundamental function—the will is equally confused and faint. The diagram below, though only approximate, is intended to indicate this

The triangles starting from the central circle represent the psychic functions: sensation; emotion; imagination; impulse and desire; thought; and intuition. The will occupies a position apart from the others, a central position indicated by the circular area surrounding the point of self-consciousness, the “I” or Ego.

We now come to the *direction of the vital interest*, and so pass from the descriptive to the dynamic aspect. One of Jung’s most valuable contributions was the discovery and description of two fundamental psychological types based on whether the vital interest is directed outwards or inwards, and thus “*extraverted*” or “*introverted*”. I should mention at once that it is less a matter of “types” in a precise and static sense, and more of the prevailing direction of the vital interest, and thus of the consequent evaluations, choices, decisions and actions. This predominating tendency can be strong (for instance, indicating this intensity in percentages—ninety per cent) or weak (sixty per cent, or say forty per cent). There is little need to describe the characteristics of the extravert and introvert; by now they are a matter of common knowledge. It is worth remembering that this prevailing tendency is subject to extreme, even pathological, variations. In its almost pure form, extraversion is to be observed in manic states, introversion in melancholia and depression.

This *direction of the vital interest* is susceptible to alternations and oscillations ranging from the normal and moderate to the extreme and pathological. The extremes in alternation are to be found in cyclothimia and manic-depressive psychoses, which may or may not be intercalated by periods of equilibrium. In addition, the alternation can be rapid or slow, the cycles long or short. It is interesting to observe how a normal alternation occurs in relation to the various ages from birth to old age. The infant is totally introverted, totally absorbed in his organic sensations. As childhood progresses, he becomes increasingly

extraverted and directs his interest towards the external world. The adolescent reverts to introversion when the awakening of energies, feelings, and emotions creates problems and crises that focus his interest upon himself. This generally gives place again to extraversion as the young man and adult become involved in relationships with others (interpersonal and social) and in professional activities. Maturity and especially old age produce a return to introversion, accompanied by detachment and waning interest in the external world, and by a tendency towards the inner life, contemplation and dispassionate observation.

By combining the tendency to extraversion or introversion with the four psychological functions he postulates, Jung arrives at a classification of eight types: the extraverted sensory, the extraverted emotional, the extraverted mental, the extraverted intuitive, and four corresponding introverted types. But this and other classifications expose those who adopt them to the dangers of schematicism and pigeon-holing, of yielding to the (so comfortable!) tendency to “label” human beings. We must be on our guard against overlooking the multifarious and complex facets of human reality. It is all too easy to regard others as “objects” instead of “subjects”. And this labeling, with its associated attitudes of judging, or more often of depreciation, often provokes hostile reactions, sometimes of an intense kind, which are thoroughly justified.

But to the eight types recognized by Jung, others must be added. Opposite interest-directions can be associated *simultaneously* with different levels in the same personality. For instance, a man may be predominantly extraverted physically, introverted emotionally and again extraverted mentally. His will can also be extraverted or introverted. Furthermore, another distinction must be made: the direction of the vital interest is subject to two separate “*modalities*” or *attitudes*: the *active* and the *passive*. Jung mentions this, but does not develop the point, which, in my opinion, has a fundamental importance. A passive extravert, endowed with excessive sensitivity, who succumbs to every external influence and is dominated by the will of others, is very different from an active extravert who tends to dominate things and people, to bend them to his will. In this sense, they are opposite types.

To this must be added the fact that there are two other interest-directions to be recognized and given the utmost consideration; the *direction downwards* towards the *low*, which may be called *subversion*, and that *upwards towards the high*, or *supra-version*. Subversion is the tendency to plumb the unconscious in its lower aspects; and it can be said to be the province of “depth psychology” in its more restricted sense (the “descent into hell”) and can be compared to sub-aquatic sport. Freudian psychoanalysis displays an almost exclusive interest in the lower aspects of human nature.

In supra-version, on the other hand, the vital interest and search are directed towards the higher aspects of the psyche, towards the superconscious, towards spiritual experiences. This, in contrast to sub-aquatic sport, can be compared to mountain-climbing. To Jung must be given the credit of having recognized and demonstrated the existence in the human being of the natural tendency towards the high, of a genuine need, which he called instinctive, for spiritual satisfaction. He gave prominence to the fact that the neglect or repression of this need can create serious neuro-psychic and psychosomatic disturbances.

Another, and important, difference is one of *quality*, which is different from direction. There can be a supra-version of an inferior kind: the dreamer, the passive idealist, the sterile theoretician, the utopian are examples of supra-version of a negative type. There is again a subversion of a superior kind, such as the scientific investigation and exploration of the lower aspects of the unconscious, what could be termed psychological geology and archaeology.

Although I cannot now discuss the psychosynthetic tasks connected with the various directions of the vital interest, I should mention that there are also other psychological types deriving from the differences in the personality “structure”. There are individuals who are relatively coherent, well “shaped”, even rigid. On the other hand there are others who are diffuse, continually changeable. Others, again, are habitually contradictory or ambivalent.

All this shows the great complexity of the human psyche and the impossibility of framing or pigeon-holing it in some designation or description arrived at from a single viewpoint. Only the sum of the various points of view, of the different approaches or “frames of reference”, can give a less imperfect conception of the psyche of that strange creature, a member of the fourth kingdom of nature—the human being.

Up to this point I have scarcely mentioned the unconscious. Its existence is by now generally admitted, except by a few psychiatrists and psychologists bound by old conceptions which can be considered outdated. According to Jung, the unconscious is an exclusively psychological concept and includes all the psychic elements, contents and processes not associated with the “I” or Ego in a conscious way. Therefore, Jung maintains, the unconscious has no “personal centre”. This is in agreement with psychosynthesis, which warns against the tendency to make an “entity” of the unconscious, almost a personality, more or less in accord or in contrast with the conscious. “Unconscious”, as I have stressed elsewhere, should be considered an adjective, not a noun, and it indicates a temporary condition of the “psychic contents”, many of which may have been conscious and may become so again.

Jung's most important contribution to the psychology of the unconscious is represented by his extensive studies of the *collective unconscious*. Before him, psychoanalysis had concerned itself almost exclusively with the study of the personal unconscious. Jung then showed the great extent of collective psychic elements and forces, which exercise a powerful effect on the human personality. In my diagram* of the constitution of the psyche, the collective unconscious is represented as lying outside the individual psyche. The demarcation line is dotted, to suggest the continuous exchanges going on between the collective and the personal unconscious. The unconscious exists at all levels, in both the personality and the collective psyche.

The collective unconscious is a vast world stretching from the biological to the spiritual level, in which therefore distinctions of origin, nature, quality and value must be made. It should be noted that Jung often disregards these distinctions: he speaks of the collective unconscious en bloc and is inclined to confuse what he terms "archaic", that is, what originates in the ancient collective human experience, with what is higher (we would say superconscious) and in the spiritual sphere. Thus Jung speaks of "archetypes" as "images"; but at times he describes them as archaic, racial images, charged with a strong emotional tone accumulated during the centuries, and on other occasions he treats them as principles, as "ideas"; and he himself suggests their affinity with the Platonic ideas. In reality, there exists not only a difference but an actual antagonism between these two conceptions of "archetypes", and from this confusion between them arise various debatable consequences, debatable at the theoretical level and liable to be harmful in therapy, as I shall have occasion to mention in speaking of Jungian therapy. In my opinion, it can be said without disrespect that Jung himself has been dominated by the potent fascination of the collective unconscious, against which he puts his patients on guard.

Jung rightly attaches great importance to symbols and symbolism, to which he devoted much study. He recognized the plurality of meanings associated with one and the same symbol, in contrast to the all too frequent tendency to interpret a symbol in only one way and on the basis of the preconceived theories of whoever interprets it. Jung showed that the same symbol can have different meanings, not only in various individual cases, but also in the same person. He showed, furthermore, that there are regressive and progressive symbols, symbols that relate to the archaic symbolism of the collective unconscious and symbols that indicate the attempts, the efforts to resolve certain problems, to bring about certain developments. Jung says that some symbols are messages from the unconscious (we would say of the superconscious) to the conscious personality, and he frequently utilizes these progressive symbols in his method of treatment.

We come now to an important subject: *spirituality and religion*. Jung possessed the great merit of recognizing and proclaiming (along with very few modern psychologists) the reality and importance of spiritual needs. He maintained that man has the need to reach an understanding of the meaning of life, to believe it has a value and purpose of a spiritual nature. He ascertained that many neuro-psychic disturbances are rooted in the lack of satisfaction of this need, in its repression. To quote his own words: "...the lack of meaning in life is a soul-sickness whose full extent and full import our time has not yet comprehended." (Jung, "*The Soul and Death*," in Spring, 1945, p. 415) He therefore fully admits the importance of the spiritual factor, and of the religions in so far as they reflect spiritual values and further the satisfaction of spiritual needs.

On the other hand, although Jung had psychic experiences of a high order, there is no evidence that he had the direct experience of a spiritual, metaphysical *reality*. This can be surmised from his declarations of agnosticism. He insists on a distinction between spiritual consciousness as a *subjective* state and a presumed metaphysical, transcendental reality; and while he affirms the existence and value of the former, he does not pronounce on the latter. He goes as far as to say that God is a "psychological function" of the individual. He does not categorically deny the possibility of God's existence, but says its objective reality cannot be demonstrated.

Jung can be coupled in this respect with the great American psychologist William James, who in his lectures on *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, given at the beginning of this century with considerable courage, advances the possibility and importance of a scientific psychological study of religious *experience*. James did not have—and he says so—a direct religious experience; and this lack in the case of both James and Jung makes their recognition of the reality and value of the spiritual experience all the more significant. Here is evidence of the true scientific spirit which leads to the admission of the existence of certain realities, if they have been ascertained and documented, even if one has not verified them personally.

Another subject of importance that of the ego and the Self, will be dealt with in the following sections on the therapeutic and educational applications.

Jung is considered a researcher, an explorer of the vast and little known territory of the psyche, but we can add that he was a courageous and brilliant pioneer who opened up new paths and gave new dimensions to the human mind. He contributed greatly to the freeing of psychology from the narrow trammels of a purely descriptive objectivism and expanded immensely its field by demonstrating the existence and the value of the higher psychic functions, of spiritual levels and needs.

Moreover, as we shall see subsequently, he points the way to liberation from the conditioning pressures on the personality and from the powerful influences exerted by the images and structures of the collective unconscious. In this way he gave effective aid in furthering the “individuation” process, the discovery and development of one’s true being, one’s Self.

Lecture 2 -Therapy

A comparative survey of Jung’s therapeutic method and that, or more precisely those, used in psychosynthesis discloses a substantial agreement in respect of the goals aimed at; but also some marked differences in the means and techniques they adopt. One of Jung’s greatest merits has been his opposition to the “pathologism” which still holds almost undisputed sway over official medicine, including psychotherapy. Attention is chiefly directed to morbid manifestations, in particular to the investigation of symptoms and their quantitative evaluation by means of numerous examinations and analyses. The aim is to arrive at the formulation of a diagnosis, that is, giving the illness a “name”. This accomplished, one proceeds to “fight” the disease, often by bringing medicinal “big guns” to bear on it, with little concern for possible damage to healthy tissues and organs. Recently, however, a reaction against excesses of this kind is becoming evident in the ranks of official medical circles. Books and articles have appeared recently that outline physical and psychological disturbances and illnesses produced by the inappropriate use of medication.

A step in the right direction is being taken by a number of doctors, endowed with a humane approach and a sense of relativity, in affirming that, in reality, there are no “diseases” but only “diseased individuals”, in each of whom the same kind of morbid state assumes different characteristics and takes a different course. But up to now only a small minority take this point of view and give it sufficient importance. This represents, moreover, but an initial step, which in itself remains inadequate: we are still in the “pathological” field. The further and decisive advance-which may seem revolutionary-is to start from the “health condition” and regard man as a fundamentally healthy being, in whom some organ may be more or less temporarily damaged or malfunctioning, but whose biological forces are always tending to re-establish harmony, the healthy state. Many symptoms then cease to be thought of as direct expressions of the illness, but are seen as defence reactions of the healthy organism against morbid agents. A typical example of such a defensive reaction is fever; and it is therefore often misguided and even harmful to fight fever with febrifugal remedies.

This “pathologism” of official medicine has been countered by a reaction in favour of the use of “nature cures” on the part of some doctors and many non-medical healers. Unfortunately this reaction not infrequently assumes excessive, sometimes fanatical proportions. Official therapy has had great and undeniable

success and saved many lives, and all the good it contains cannot and must not be discarded. Antibiotics afford a good example of this situation: their moderate use in appropriate cases can be of great therapeutic benefit, although their abuse can do a great deal of harm.

Here too the principle of synthesis should be applied. Irreconcilable opposites do not exist; opposing attitudes and methods can be united in a constructive synthesis. The matter could be formulated also in this way: it is not “this or that” but “this and that”; it is a question of finding in every case the right adjustment, the appropriate integration, the synthesis of what seems opposed and is instead complementary.

All this is true also in the field of neuro-psychic disturbances and physical ills of psychological origin (psychosomatic disturbances). Here too, and indeed particularly in this area, the diagnostic label often has a very relative importance. Combinations of symptoms are found which do not lend themselves to being pigeon-holed according to the “diseases” described in psychiatric treatises. Here also there are “defensive structures” erected by the psyche of the patient which must be recognized and not demolished until it is discovered how to replace them with other and better patterns. Practice of psychotherapy is often directed to “fighting” symptoms and disorders and neglects what is healthy and sometimes of higher quality in the patient.

As I have mentioned, Jung reacted vigorously against such “pathologism” and declared: “I prefer to understand man in the perspective of his health.” (Cahen, *La Guérison Psychologique*, Librairie de l’Université, Georg et Cie, Geneva, p. 180.) Jung’s position here is in complete agreement with the basic principle of psychosynthesis.

Let us now examine in more detail the therapy used by Jung. This survey, however, presents difficulties for various reasons. First of all, Jung openly acknowledged the infinite variety of human beings and conditions, and therefore the necessity of using different psychotherapeutic methods adapted to the constitution and specific situation of each patient. Here is how he puts it: “Seeing that anything in this world, if carried beyond a certain limit, can be pushed to the absurd, the problem of the neuroses and the means of curing them becomes a formidable matter. I am always entertained when clinicians who conduct their affairs admirably, claim to cure by A’s method, or C’s or F’s, or even J’s. Such things do not exist and cannot exist, and if they do occur are well on the way to failure. If I treat Mr. X, I am forced to apply the X method, and with Mrs. Z, the Z method; and this means that the ways and means of treatment are predominantly determined by the nature of the patient.” Here too there is a close agreement with the plurality of psychotherapeutic techniques adopted by psychosynthesis.

Another difficulty arises from the fact that the methods used by Jung were developed and expanded during the many decades of his medical activities, parallel with his increasingly wide and deep experience and with the new ideas and intuitions that presented themselves to his alert and open mind. For these reasons—as well as because of the growing prevalence in his last years of his cognitive interests and psychological investigations over purely therapeutic questions—Jung never wanted to set forth his methods of treatment in any systematized and complete manner.

To fill this gap to some extent, one of Jung's pupils, Dr. Roland Cahen, has, with great patience and skill, extracted from the mass of Jung's writings the passages and chapters dealing with therapy and compiled them in *La Guérison Psychologique* (see above). This work was revised and approved by Jung himself and thus constitutes an authorized exposition.

A preliminary observation of a general nature concerns the actual name of Jungian therapy. He kept to the last the designation "Analytical Psychology", which he adopted to indicate its derivation from and connection with psychoanalysis. In reality, however, this name does not do justice to the integrative and synthetic tendency which increasingly inspired Jungian therapy. In fact this aims at producing a profound transformation of the personality and its integration by means of what Jung called the "process of individuation".

But before explaining and examining Jung's specific method, it should be made clear that, as he said himself, this method must not be used with all patients. There are many, specially among the young, whose disturbances have been produced by psychic traumas, by conflicts rooted in the personal unconscious, or by strife between the individual and other people, above all members of the family and the social environment. Jung maintains that in these cases, treatment mainly psychoanalytical and certain methods that he included in what he called "little therapy" may suffice (see *La Guérison Psychologique*, p. 239). However, these cases often require also the application of active techniques that Jung neglects.

On the other hand, there is a broad group of patients whose disturbances are the product of crises and deep conflicts of an "existential" kind, which involve fundamental human problems about the meaning and purpose of life in general and about the individual's own life. It is to be remarked that not infrequently the patient is not aware of these deep-seated causes of his illness, and it is the treatment that renders him conscious of them and then helps him to eliminate them.

The principal aim of Jung's method, as elaborated by him during the last period of his active work, is the liberation of the individual from the influences of his

personal unconscious and of the collective unconscious, by means of a process the phases of which can be indicated as follows:

1. Clear vision, or the above-mentioned recognition of the nature and causes of the illness.
2. Conscious assimilation of the contents of the unconscious.
3. The discovery of the Self.
4. The transformation of the personality.
5. Its integration and synthesis.

From this it is evident how closely what could be called Jung's "therapeutic program" is akin to that of psychosynthetic therapy.

It is not my intention to describe Jung's procedures; they can be found amply dealt with in his books and in those of his pupils. He developed a series of profound concepts, sometimes somewhat obscure, about the "shadow", about certain parts of the unconscious both antithetical and complementary to the conscious personality, which he called "anima" in the man and "animus" in the woman. All this, I repeat, can be found in the books of Jung and his collaborators. I will touch only on some points to emphasize the similarities and differences between these concepts and the techniques of psychosynthesis.

1. **Clarification.** Jung fosters the patient's awareness of the contents of the unconscious and their assimilation in his conscious personality by means of dream analysis and free drawing. The analysis of dreams is the basis of psychoanalytic therapy, but this implies their *interpretation* and here arises a substantial difference between orthodox psychoanalysis and Jungian "analysis". In psychoanalysis the interpretation tends to "reduce" everything to infantile impressions and traumas, and to instinctive urges. Jung instead, although admitting the existence of dreams of this type, says that there are dreams of very different kinds, particularly those he calls "prospective" or constructive, i.e., dreams containing true messages from the unconscious (I would say from its higher level, the superconscious), which indicate to the conscious personality of the patient certain situations, certain facts, of which he was not aware, and point to the solution of his conflicts and the way leading to integration. In his work, Jung gives many examples of dreams of this type and their interpretation, confirmed by the patient's recognition and by the curative effects. In reality, dreams fall into many different categories, and one must be on one's guard against stereotyped interpretations of the "dreambook" variety. But too often therapists succumb to this facile procedure, ignoring the fact that the same

symbol can have as many meanings (some of them contradictory) as there are patients. Of this Jung was well aware.

Free drawing provides an excellent means of promoting the emergence of the unconscious and encouraging messages from the superconscious. In this connection, it should be pointed out that the usefulness of free drawing is independent of the artistic value, or lack of it, of the drawing itself. Free drawing is an expression of the unconscious and may be of a rudimentary character; indeed it is easier for the unconscious to 'give messages' to someone who has never drawn than to a person with some training and skill in drawing. In the latter case, a concern about form may interfere with and diminish the spontaneity of the unconscious.

Although psychosynthesis makes wide use of these profitable methods, it avails itself also of others that encourage the emergence of the contents of the unconscious. Prominent among them is the presentation of "evocative pictures", called "T.A.T." (Thematic Apperception Test) much in use in the United States. It consists of twenty standard designs; but I do not restrict myself to these in using the test, principally because they are negative in character, tending to evoke only complexes and conflicts and not promote the emergence of the higher aspects. Moreover, in view of the great variety of patients, I prefer to use different pictures, adapted to each particular case. Naturally, this precludes the possibility of compiling the statistics beloved of experimental psychologists—which are so often useless.

There is, besides, Desoille's procedure, the "rêve éveille" (waking dream), which, skilfully used, is very rewarding, not only in stimulating the manifestation of the contents of the unconscious, but also in promoting the therapeutic integration of the personality. A method akin to this is the "Initiated Symbol Projection" of Leuner. In addition to the images in use by these and other methods, I avail myself of a wide variety of symbols chosen for their appropriateness to the type of patient concerned. (See *Psychosynthesis-A Manual of Principles and Techniques*, pp. 177-191.) Listening to suitable passages of music also yields very good results, because the reactions of the unconscious to music are lively and spontaneous.

2. The entry, not infrequently a veritable irruption, of unconscious elements and tendencies, in particular of the collective unconscious, may produce troubles and sometimes be dangerous, as Jung clearly recognized. Therefore in the practice of psychosynthesis—parallel with the evocation of the "daemons" of the unconscious, and at times even before—active methods are employed to reinforce self-consciousness, the consciousness of the "I" or Ego, and to develop its power of dominating the elements already present and active in the conscious personality. This so important part of psychotherapy is generally neglected. The

discovery of the unconscious, the interest in investigation have often deflected therapists from the consideration, of first importance, of the conscious personality and its centre, the “I” or Ego. A typical admission of this omission was made-by Emil Gutherl at the American Psychoanalytic Convention at Washington in 1958. Here are his words: “We should recognize that the ego is far more important than has hitherto been acknowledged, but we know almost nothing about it”.

Among the many existing techniques for strengthening the Ego, the development and training of the *will* is accorded an important place in psychosynthesis. (The will, as I have said elsewhere, can be termed “the unknown factor” in modern psychology.) In addition, specific techniques are used for the activation and “descent” into consciousness of the contents and activities of the higher part of the unconscious, the superconscious.

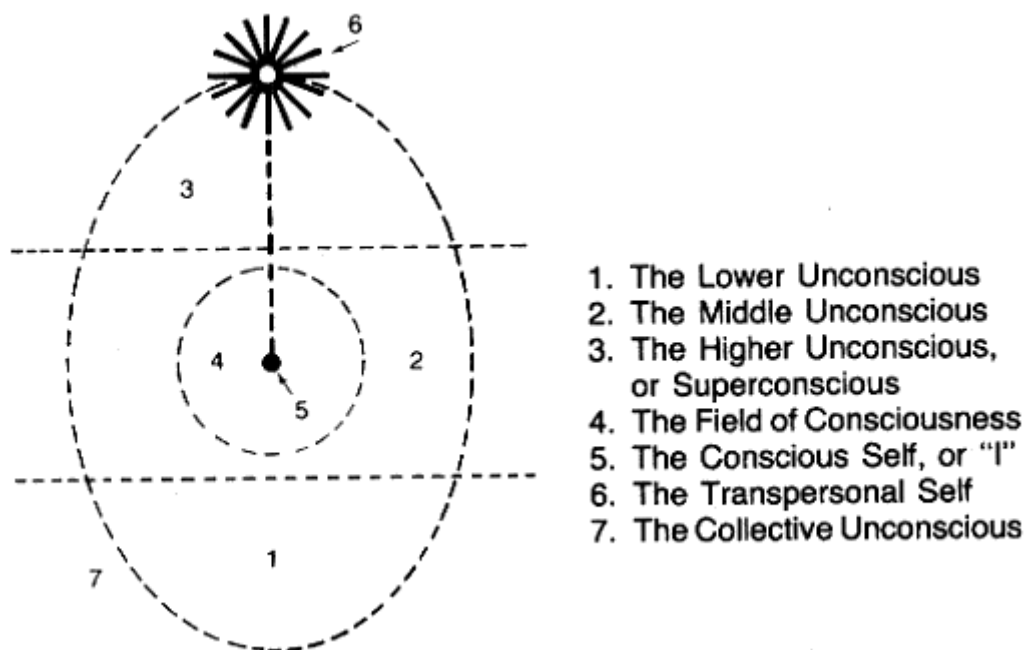
3. We come now to the really central point—*the discovery of the Self*. Here we must make clear how Jung’s conception of the Self differs from that of psychosynthesis. For Jung it is an “intermediate point” in which the conscious and the unconscious meet. (See Jacobi: *The Psychology of Carl C. Jung*.) He considers it an “archetypal figure” and states: “From the intellectual point of view, the Self is none other than a psychological concept, a construction aimed at expressing an essence, imperceptible and inconceivable as such, because it surpasses our comprehension.” And later he says: “The idea of a Self is in itself a *transcendent* postulate justifiable solely from the psychological point of view and without possibility of scientific proof.” (Quoted from *Depth Psychology* by A. Farau and H. Shaffens. p. 116.)

Psychosynthesis, on the other hand, regards the Self as a *reality*, rather as a *living Entity*, direct and certain knowledge or awareness of which *can* be had. In other words, it can be defined as one of those “immediate data of consciousness” (to use Bergson’s expression) which have no need of demonstration but bear with them their own evidence—as happens in the case of ethical conscience, aesthetic experience and the experience of the will. There is a considerable body of testimony in support of this. Here, out of many, is the significant contribution of Father Gratry:

“We possess an ‘inner sense’ which at special times when we succeed in interrupting the habitual flow of distractions and passions gives us direct and clear knowledge of our Soul...I used to experience an inner form, full of strength, beauty and joy, a form of light and fire which sustained my entire being; stable, always the same, often recaptured during my life; forgotten at intervals, but always recognized with infinite delight and the exclamation, “Here is my real Being.” (*La Connaissance de l’Ame*)

Others emphasize in their testimony the universal aspect of the consciousness of the Self. Hermann Keyserling, for instance, writes: “That which is deeper, more substantial than the individual is never the ‘general’, but the ‘universal’: and the ‘universal’ expresses itself precisely through the individual, and the latter becomes more universal in the measure in which he becomes deeper.” (*Problems of Personal Life*, p.167). We have here an example of the “coincidentia oppositorum”, of the fact that terms which rationally, according to Aristotelian logic, appear to be opposites are not mutually exclusive. Life is a continual synthesis of opposites; even biological life incorporates a delicate equilibrium (homeostasis) between antagonistic systems.

The twofold aspect, individual and universal, of the Self is indicated in the diagram below of man’s psychic structure by the position of the “star”, which is partially outside the periphery of the individual psyche and partially within it. The former indicates the union of the Self with transcendent or ontological Reality, the universal Self; the latter the relationship with the individual superconscious. The Ego, or conscious “I”, is an emanation from or projection of the Self and can become aware of it in various ways and degrees, can identify itself more or less completely and temporarily with the Self.



There is, I repeat, no conflict between these two aspects of the Self: far from opposing each other, they integrate with each other. As an Oriental writer has lucidly put it: “No identity (i.e., self-awareness) can exist without universality, and there is no consciousness of the universal without individual realization.” Poets sometimes have intuitions that reach beyond intellectual concepts. An Italian poet, Carducci, had a vivid experience of this fusion and expressed it admirably in a stanza of his *Cantico dell’Amore* (Song of Love):

“Is it I who embrace the world, or from within

The Universe that reabsorbs me in itself?

Ah, it was a note of the eternal poem I heard

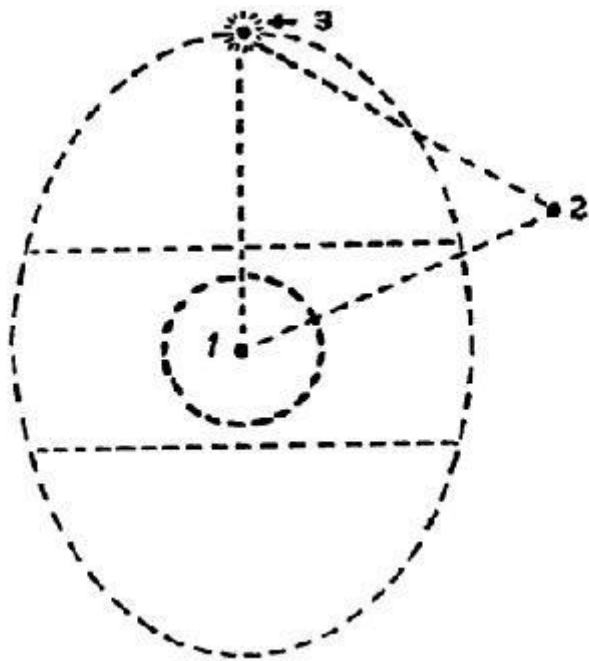
And sought to echo in this little verse.”

The poet is not aware how it has happened, whether the “I” has become expanded into the universe or the universal life has incorporated him in itself. Furthermore, he is aware of the difficulty of expressing this experience, this state of consciousness, and of the inadequacy of any verbal formulation (“this little verse”).

An examination of the varying proportions of the individual and universal aspects in these experiences would prove very interesting. Here I will mention only that in experiences of a mystical, intuitive type, the universal aspect is predominant, that is, the invasion of the consciousness by a wider Reality. On the other hand, in experiences gained through psycho-spiritual training, in which the consciousness seeks to rise to the Self and achieves a momentary union with It, the sense of self-consciousness remains uppermost. The individual continues to feel “present” and active, while participating in a far wider type of consciousness.

4. Let us now examine the *phases of the transformation of the personality and its integration*. According to Jung, they constitute an essentially spontaneous process, which, however, can be fostered by the “catalytic” presence of the therapist and the human relationship with him. Jung accords special importance to this relationship, which he calls “transference”. The Jungian concept of the transference is neither clear nor unequivocal, and it altered in the course of the years. He himself states in the “Conclusion” of his book *The Psychology of the Transference*: “The problematic character of the transference is so complex and many-sided that I lack the categories needed to offer a systematic exposition of it.” (p. 171) He has thus preferred to deal with it through a commentary and interpretation of an alchemical text, the *Rosarium Philosophorum*, the symbolism of which appears extremely complicated and obscure, and in which Jung himself finds contradictions.

In psychosynthesis the problem of building good relations between patient and therapist is rendered easier—or shall we say less difficult—by the therapist’s not only pointing out and suggesting to the patient, as Jung does, the goal of his “individuation”, but encouraging and educating him from the outset to practice active methods of acquiring an increasingly clear self-consciousness, the development of a strong will and the mastery and right use of his impulsive



emotional, imaginative and mental energies, and to avail himself of all means of gaining independence of the therapist.

In spite of the variety and complexity of relationships created between patient and therapist, in the practice of psychosynthesis one can distinguish four principal ones; and each is utilized, directed and regulated with the cure and well-being of the patient in view:

a. *The transference*—in the strict sense originally attributed to it by

Freud, i.e., the “projection” onto the doctor of the patient’s impulses, attachments and emotions felt in childhood towards his parents. These attitudes can be positive (loving) or negative (hostile). The projections have to be analyzed and dissolved. Here there is agreement between Jungian therapy, psychoanalysis and psychosynthesis.

b. The *specific* relationship created by what may be termed the therapeutic situation. In it the therapist represents and exercises an essentially “paternal” function. He must, to some extent, take on the role and task of protector, counsellor and guide. In dream symbolism, says Jung, he frequently appears under the aspect of the “wise old man” and corresponds to what the Indians call “guru”. This relationship is very different from the unconscious projection that happens in the transference. It is conscious, factual, real.

1. Conscious self or “I”

2. External unifying centre

3. Higher Self

It is indicated in the diagram by the star outside the psyche of the subject, which acts as a link or bridge between his ego and his Self. When the ego fails to reach consciousness of the Self directly, “vertically”, it can be effectively helped by the therapist who represents for the patient some one in touch with his own Self and therefore becomes a “model”, or even a “catalyst”.

c. *A human relationship* which is developed as the treatment proceeds and creates psychological reactions at various levels and of different kinds. A detailed examination of this cannot be entered into on this occasion; I may say only that the therapist's delicate and difficult task is to maintain this relationship within proper limits and, one might say, "at a high level", assenting to its positive or constructive aspects, but resisting the attachments, demands, pretences and attempts to monopolize on the part of the patient. It can be done with firmness coupled with tact and kindness, and the patient made to understand how these attitudes, while they may provide temporary gratification, are in reality harmful to him.

The transition from the second to the third type of relationship is valuable, even indispensable, for a variety of reasons; above all to promote the patient's growing autonomy, then to eliminate the tendency, rooted in moral laziness, to lean on someone else, unload his own responsibilities and get himself led by the hand; further, to prevent the crisis of the patient's discovering human imperfections in his mentor and helper—it happens easily, one might say inevitably! —and disappointedly switching from excessive admiration and obedience to criticism and hostility equally excessive.

d. *The resolution of the relationship* at the conclusion of the treatment. This is a critical point and needs to be handled with wisdom. I have said "resolution" and not termination of the relationship, because the conclusion of the treatment can frequently happen very gradually and almost imperceptibly, and also because the positive relationship can continue afterwards in some form, either as a friendship or collaboration, or both. Often the cured patient is able to understand and help other ill people better than the so-called healthy. In this way the improved patient can, even before being completely cured, collaborate and maintain a constructive association with his doctor.

These patient relationships, and in general the whole therapeutic process, demand adequate training on the part of the therapist, not merely scientific and technical, but above all humane and spiritual. Jung was well aware of this need and expressed it explicitly. Here is a statement of his on this point: "The recent development of analytical psychology...gives a prominent place to the personality of the doctor himself as a curative or harmful factor, and demands the inner perfecting of the doctor, the self-education of the educator."

Jung therefore strongly insists on the necessity of a *didactic analysis*; in other words, whoever intends to practice psychotherapy must submit himself to a psychological analysis by another psychotherapist. In fact, says Jung, "the doctor will not spot in the patient what he does not see in himself, or will be unduly influenced by it." (*La Guérison Psychologique*, p. 237.) Psychosynthesis is fully in agreement on this point. Two things are worth noting: the first, that

when the didactic psychosynthesis cannot be managed, the therapist should put himself through an “autopsychosynthesis”. It may be recalled that a non-”orthodox”, psychoanalyst, Karen Homey, is in agreement here, as evidenced by her book *Self-analysis* (N.Y.: Norton, 1942.) But she restricts herself to the limits imposed by psychoanalysis and does not enter the field of psychosynthesis or take into account the higher elements of the psyche.

In psychosynthesis, on the other hand, the therapist can avail himself of a greater number of aids, in the form of active techniques, which he can apply to himself and experiment with. I would say that every one of us, but in particular every therapist and every educator, can be considered a “living laboratory”, in which the “occupant” is “experimenting” for twenty-four hours a day (as this includes dreams). Moreover, it is not indispensable that either didactic psychosynthesis or autopsychosynthesis be concluded before beginning psycho-therapeutic practice. The need in this field is so urgent and wide that anyone willing to devote himself to it should do so as soon as his training permits, even if lacking in some aspects. His equipment must, however, include a critical sense and humility sufficient to recognize his own deficiencies, and the goodwill to eliminate them. In fact, autopsychosynthesis, like education, should be a lifetime occupation.

Lecture 3- Therapy and Education

The transformation of the personality and its integration or psychosynthesis—apart from the transference process—often occur spontaneously, or, as Jung maintains, as a result of the creative and synthesizing action of the symbols that emerge from the unconscious. Jung does not advise the active intervention in this process either of the therapist or of the will of the Ego, the conscious “I”.

Psychosynthetic therapy—while fully recognizing the importance of the spontaneous processes of self-healing and the integrative function of symbols—proves that these processes can be promoted and effectively assisted by the co-operation of the conscious personality. This action is performed by what constitutes the center, the dynamic element, that is, the conscious and active subject, using his will.

The necessity for such active co-operation is based on two reasons. The first, already mentioned, is to contain and control the energies erupting from the unconscious, and then to promote their transmutation, sublimation and constructive application. This particularly applies to sexual, emotional and aggressive tendencies and energies, which lead to the intensification of those already present in the conscious personality. The importance of this part of the treatment is evident, as is that of the knowledge and use of the active methods for its implementation. These methods can be widely applied in education and

autopsychosynthesis as well, and should be generally made known and practiced.

The second reason for active co-operation in achieving the integration, the synthesis, of the personality lies in the advantage, sometimes indeed the necessity, of developing, by means of active training, the psychic functions that have remained at primitive, infantile levels, paralyzed by devaluation or inhibited by repression. In modern man, engrossed in his interests and practical concerns—often with a one-sided development of the intellectual function—the higher feelings, aesthetic sensitivity, the capacity to commune with nature and the ability to establish human communication with others are often lacking or have atrophied. In other people, instead, emotional and imaginative exuberance relegates to an inferior position mental, and sometimes also practical, activity. There are still other cases, to which Jung draws attention, in which the higher aspirations and needs are ignored, underestimated or feared, and thus neglected or repressed. One of Jung's most valuable contributions is his having called the attention of psychotherapists to these cases and encouraged in his medical work the expression and satisfaction of these spiritual needs.

But further advance can be made along the road opened by him. The irruption of the superconscious spiritual contents and energies can be actively assisted. As mentioned above, in many cases—indeed I believe in most of them—an active training is required to eliminate, or at least attenuate, the lack of balance in the development of the various psychological functions. This assistance is of particular importance in enabling the conscious “I” to contain and assimilate the irrupting superconscious energies and to integrate them harmoniously into the totality of the psychic life.

The use of the active techniques can and should be promoted by the therapist. I have said “promoted”, since it is not incumbent upon him to teach and apply them personally. He can avail himself of the services of competent assistants, entrusting the patient to their respective competencies, but always controlling and guiding the treatment according to a well-defined program, and encouraging the patient to learn to carry it on by himself as soon as possible.

The techniques amount to some dozens, and I will enumerate only the principal groups:

I. Psycho -physical techniques

1. Exercises in relaxation.

2. Concentration on and awareness of physical sensations, including the muscular (methods of Vittoz, Schultz, etc.).

3. Exercises in neuro-muscular co-ordination—Rhythmic movements and dancing.
4. Physical activities of various kinds.
5. Handicrafts.
6. Drawing, painting and modeling.
7. Playing musical instruments.
8. Diction—Recitation-Singing.

II. Psychological techniques

1. Observation.
2. Visualization.
3. Evocation of auditory, tactile, olfactory, etc., “images”.
4. Mental exercises—Meditation, etc.

III. Psycho-spiritual techniques These fall into two groups:

1. Those which promote the elevation of the “I” or Ego, the center of self-consciousness, to levels usually superconscious and towards union with the spiritual Self.
2. Those which promote the opening of the consciousness to the “descending” inflow of the contents and energies of the superconscious.

The choice of the techniques to be used in therapy must be determined by the requirements of each individual case. They should be combined and alternated according to a plan or program that is intended to promote the gradual and harmonious integration of the personality. This program gives psychosynthetic therapy and education its specific character. I have included psychosynthetic education, because the greater part of the techniques enumerated can, with appropriate adaptations and modifications, be applied effectively in *educational* practice, in the family as well as in school.

This brings us to the consideration of Jung’s ideas on education. Though he did not concern himself directly and actively with the educational application of his conceptions, his writings on the subject contain much of interest and value. As far back as 1910 Jung published an essay on *Conflicts of the Infantile Mind*, in

which—on the basis of a series of accurate observations on the psychological development of a 4-5-year old child—he ably examined various problems that arise in the infantile mind and must therefore be tackled by parents. These problems concern the birth of children, the contrast between imagination and thought, the effective relations with parents, etc. The various Prefaces to the successive editions and the Appendix contain some wise observations on the relative and complementary features of various points of view and interpretations in psychology. These are supplemented by useful advice on how to teach and explain to children the facts about sexuality. Later Jung elaborated his educational ideas and experiences within the general framework of his psychological conceptions in a series of lectures, which have been published under the title *Analytical Psychology and Education* in the volume *Contributions to Analytical Psychology* (London: Harcourt Brace, 1928). Jung summarizes his ideas in the following statement:

“The difference between this and any former psychology lies in the fact that analytical psychology does not avoid dealing with admittedly complex mental phenomena, such as the four main functions of orientation: thinking, feeling, intuition, and sensation. We admit that we do not know what these functions really are. We should like very much to know into what primitive elements feeling, for instance, could be resolved. But despite our ignorance of ultimate principles, we deal with these functions as if they were clearly definable organs of the mind. Another difference is the method of investigation. We have no academic laboratory. Our laboratory is the world. Our tests are real events of daily human life and the persons we test are our patients, relatives, friends, and—last but not least—ourselves. There are no needle pricks, artificial shocks, surprise-lights, or any of the manifold paraphernalia of laboratory experiment; but there are the pains and joys, the terrors and achievements of real life that provide us with our material. Our method is the understanding of life as represented in the psyche of men.” (*Contributions to Analytical Psychology*, p. 348)

Jung, as we have seen, not only attaches great importance to the human relationship between patient and therapist, but also considers the psychological rapport between parents and children and between teachers and pupils as having decisive significance. For this reason the educator must acquire a clear awareness that his psychological ignorance and deficiencies, his own complexes and conflicts, *inevitably* produce injurious repercussions upon those he wishes to educate. He should therefore recognize the heavy responsibility he bears and his duty to train himself for his noble but arduous task by means of an adequate *self-education*, founded upon the discoveries and methods of the new dynamic psychology.

On this point, Jung has expressed himself thus: “It is of course quite impossible that parents should have no complexes at all: that would be superhuman. But they should deal with them consciously, they should make it a duty to work them out for the sake of their children. They should not evade their troubles, and try to repress them in order to avoid painful discussions.” (ibid., p. 375)

The specific applications of Jung’s ideas and method of education do not lend themselves to being summarized. The way he puts them into practice in the cases on which he reports should be studied, and this can be done in the above-mentioned book. Furthermore, one of Jung’s pupils, Dr. Frances Wickes, has written an excellent book on child psychology, for which Jung himself provided an extensive Introduction. Its title is *The Inner World of Childhood* (New York: Appleton-Century-Croft; 1927) and it contains much valuable advice on the education of children, in particular on the problems of *parental influence on the child*. In a chapter of special interest and originality, the author deals with an aspect of the psychic life of the child that is little known—his creation of *imaginary companions*.

At a conference on education in Basel in 1942, Jung delivered a lecture on *The Gifted Child*. Its subject is of much importance and present interest in view of the growing consideration being given to the recognition and education of gifted and particularly gifted children. The value of Jung’s essay is enhanced by the description of his own personal experiences and hardships as a “boy of talent”, and therefore deserves being quoted at some length. Here is Jung’s lively and amusingly written account of his scholastic vicissitudes:

“When I was a schoolboy of ten, I did not feel at all sleepy or stupid. I was often exceedingly bored when the master used to take particular pains with pupils unable to follow. But the boredom was by no means the worst part. Among our many composition themes, which were hardly inspiring, we were once given one that interested me. I set to with enthusiasm and polished my sentences with the utmost care. In the joyous anticipation of having written the best composition, or at least one of the best, I handed it to the teacher. After giving back the compositions, it was his custom to discuss first the best, and then the others in order of merit. Mine was not the first, nor the second, and not even the third.

All the others preceded mine, and when he had finished discussing the last effort, the weakest of them all, the teacher inflated himself in a threatening and ominous manner and delivered his verdict: “Jung’s composition is by far the best but he has ruined it by triviality and lack of thought. For this reason it does not merit a place in the list.” “It’s not true,” I interrupted the teacher, “I’ve never worked so hard on a composition as I did on this.” “It’s a lie,” he shouted. “Look at X (X was the pupil who had produced the worst composition); he has really

taken trouble. He'll get ahead in life, but you no, because one doesn't succeed with ability and tricks! ·

I said nothing, and from that moment on I did no more work in my German class. "This experience, it is true, dates from more than a half-century ago, and I do not doubt that in the meantime school conditions have greatly changed and improved. But that episode gave me much to think about and left me with a sense of bitterness, which, however, with broader experience of life has given place to a more balanced assessment. I understood how, deep down, the master's attitude had been prompted by the noble principle of helping the weak and eradicating the bad.

Sometimes, however, it unfortunately happens that these principles get turned into mechanical rules, which, in their turn, get accepted without further consideration and give birth to deplorable caricatures of the good of this sort. The weak are helped and the bad is fought in this way, it is true, but at the same time the danger of neglecting the more gifted individual is exposed. It is as if emergence from the ranks were in itself an awkward and troublesome affair. There's nothing to be done about it; the average man distrusts and is suspicious of all his intelligence cannot grasp. 'Ii est. trop intelligent'- a phrase that justifies the direst suspicions!" (pp. 135-137)

Jung rightly deplores this pseudo-humanitarian concept and false conception of democracy. "The desire to bring all people to the same level and reduce them to the status of sheep by suppressing the natural aristocratic or hierarchical structure (in the psycho-spiritual sense, be it well noted) leads infallibly, sooner or later, to a catastrophe." (pp. 144-145)

Jung then adds some valuable observations on the difficulties of recognizing and educating talented children. "The problem of the gifted child," he writes, "is in no way a simple matter, since he is not recognizable merely by the fact of his being a good scholar. In certain cases indeed he is the very reverse. He may even be aggravatingly distinguishable by his special brand of absent-mindedness, with his head full of nonsense, by his laziness, negligence, lack of attention, rudeness, obstinacy and by giving the impression of being only half awake. Judging only by superficial observation, it is often hard to tell a talented child apart from a weak-minded one. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that gifted children are not always precocious but apt to develop slowly, so that their gifts may remain latent for a long time." (pp. 137-138)

Jung draws attention to and shows the importance of what he calls the gifts of the heart: "In addition to the gifts of the head, there exist also those of the heart, which are no less important, but of which it is easy to be unaware, because often in these cases the head is weaker than the heart. And yet people of this sort are

frequently more useful and valuable to the well-being of society than those with different gifts.” (p. 141)

“Gifted children come up against complications not only in the intellectual but also in the moral field, i.e., in the sphere of feelings. Adults who frequently distort the truth, tell lies and commit innumerable other sins of moral negligence can create problems in a morally gifted child that upset him a great deal. In precisely the same way that one fails to notice or undervalues intellectual sensitivity and precocity, one adopts similar attitudes towards a talented child’s criticism in moral and emotional situations. Often the gifts of the heart are less evident and striking than the intellectual and technical ones; and just as the latter have the right to exact special understanding from the educator, so the former also call for the best of which he is capable; in other words, they demand that he himself be educated.” (p. 140)

Finally, Jung calls attention to the lack of balance and to the contradictions existing in gifted children and to the dangers of their gifts being used in antisocial and destructive ways. He writes: “There are not a few talented individuals whose usefulness is paralyzed, even perverted often, by their human shortcomings in all other fields. Talent has no real value of itself; it only has it if the rest of the personality is capable of following its lead to the point where it can be applied to advantage. Unfortunately, creative ability can exhibit itself equally effectively in a destructive direction as well. Whether it is directed towards the good or the bad is decided solely by the moral attitude of the personality.” (p. 142)

In connection with the education of these children, Jung raises the problem whether they should be brought together in special schools or left in normal ones. He favours the second alternative, but does not go into the various aspects of the problem. I have discussed this subject in a pamphlet *The Education of Gifted and Super-gifted Children* (New York: Psychosynthesis Research Foundation).

Education is a form of interindividual relationship; let us therefore examine the problems and methods of interindividual and social relationships, from Jung’s standpoint and that of psychosynthesis. In practice, the goal or ultimate phase of Jungian therapy is *Individuation*. I say “in practice”, because Jung admits that (to quote his own words) “the actual process of individuation carries with it an awareness of what the human community is...Individuation presupposes a unification with oneself and therefore with humanity, of which everyone carries a particle within him.” (*La Guérison Psychologique*, p. 228) “The single individual,” reiterates Jung, “does not live his life to the full and fails to grasp its purpose, if he is incapable of putting his ‘I’ at the service of a spiritual and superhuman order.” (p. 145)

Jung, however, limits himself to these allusions which indicate an aspiration more than an effective move in that direction. His method is not designed to actively help the patient to initiate and to “live” that communion with other human beings. Rather he insists strongly on the opposition, indeed the conflict, between the individual and the mass, between the personal life and the collective pressure exercised by modern social life. This is mechanized and regimented, not solely materially but also psychologically, as evidenced by the mass ideologies, the pressure to conform, the suggestion and “persuasion” of advertising and various forms of propaganda. Jung shares this position with a number of other critics of modern life: philosophers, sociologists and psychologists, among whom Erich Fromm is outstanding.

There is, unfortunately, a great deal of truth in all this, but that rigid and extreme opposition appears to be one-sided and too absolute. We must recognize that the individual and the mass are included in the extensive sphere of human relations, forming part of the normal life of man, who is, in his inner nature as well as from external necessity, a being both social and sociable. It is indeed true that these human relationships are far from being easy, harmonious and constructive. We can observe this all the time. Apart from mass pressures, human relationships come up against many difficulties. Those who are predominantly introverted find it difficult to create psychological relations with others, to communicate “humanly.” The predominantly extraverted, on the other hand, establish a wide network of relationships, but these are superficial, incidental, so that in reality the individual remains psychologically and spiritually isolated.

The difficulties and conflicts in human relations are due in large measure to an excessive tendency to self-assertion and over-valuation of success in the external world. This leads to the depreciation or repression of the higher feelings, and the capacity for loving understanding, compassion, altruistic love. The revaluation and active development of these feelings thus become a necessity. There are, as I have said previously, effective methods of doing this, and the therapist and educator should consider one of their most important tasks to be the fostering of the awakening and expression of those feelings.

The first step is the recognition and proper appreciation of the human and higher values. One effective practice to this end is the study of the inspiring lives of those who have exemplified these values—the heroes, the saints, the great humanitarians. But many of them, far more than one might suppose, are to be found among simple and humble people, as the “awards for kindness” (which should be greatly extended) have demonstrated.

The second step is to arouse and foster goodwill. There are several ways of doing so; and a particularly effective one is direct contact with human suffering, and this can be obtained by visits to, and, better still, active help in hospitals,

prisons, city slums, and visiting and helping lonely individuals—particularly old people. Also there is co-operation in creative and socially useful activities, in which the group spirit and solidarity are developed, and understanding and friendships established.

There is a series of methods with which I cannot deal now; I will merely enumerate them:

I. *Preliminary methods*: Elimination of obstacles: egocentricity; separative self-assertion; hostility and combativeness; prejudices and preconceptions.

II. *Positive methods*: Understanding; generosity; goodwill; altruistic love.

Help in achieving interpersonal and group psychosynthesis (also called interindividual and social psychosynthesis) forms an important, indeed an indispensable part of psychosynthetic therapy and education. It can be justly maintained that our civilization is neurotic and ill-balanced, and that there exist real group neuroses and psychoses; for instance, national glorification and ideological fanaticism. Therefore psychotherapy

should include and undertake these more comprehensive tasks, for which it is well equipped. Every sick individual who is helped to establish right human relations becomes an element of balance and health in his community; and inversely, every effort aimed at adjusting unbalance and collective psychoses makes it easier for the single individual to reach and maintain his personal health.

Thus the tasks and activity of therapists, educators and all who, in different fields and ways, devote themselves to the healing of social ills converge and unite in a double purpose. The first and urgent one is to safeguard humanity from the dangers its blindness and folly have created for itself. The second, to promote the coming of a new and better civilization, in which the individual can, in freedom and for the good of all, give expression to and make the most of the wonderful potentialities inherent in each human being.

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